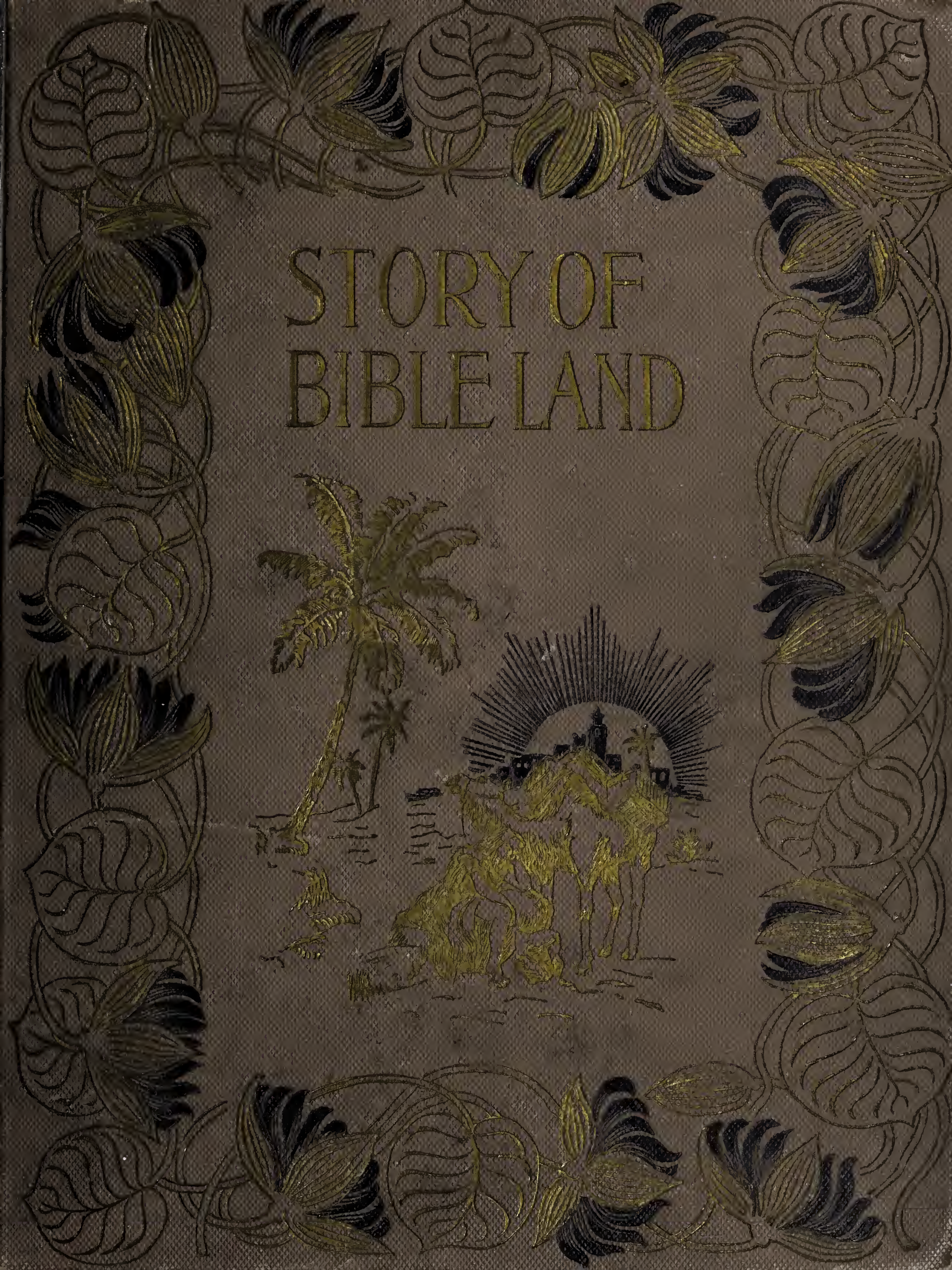
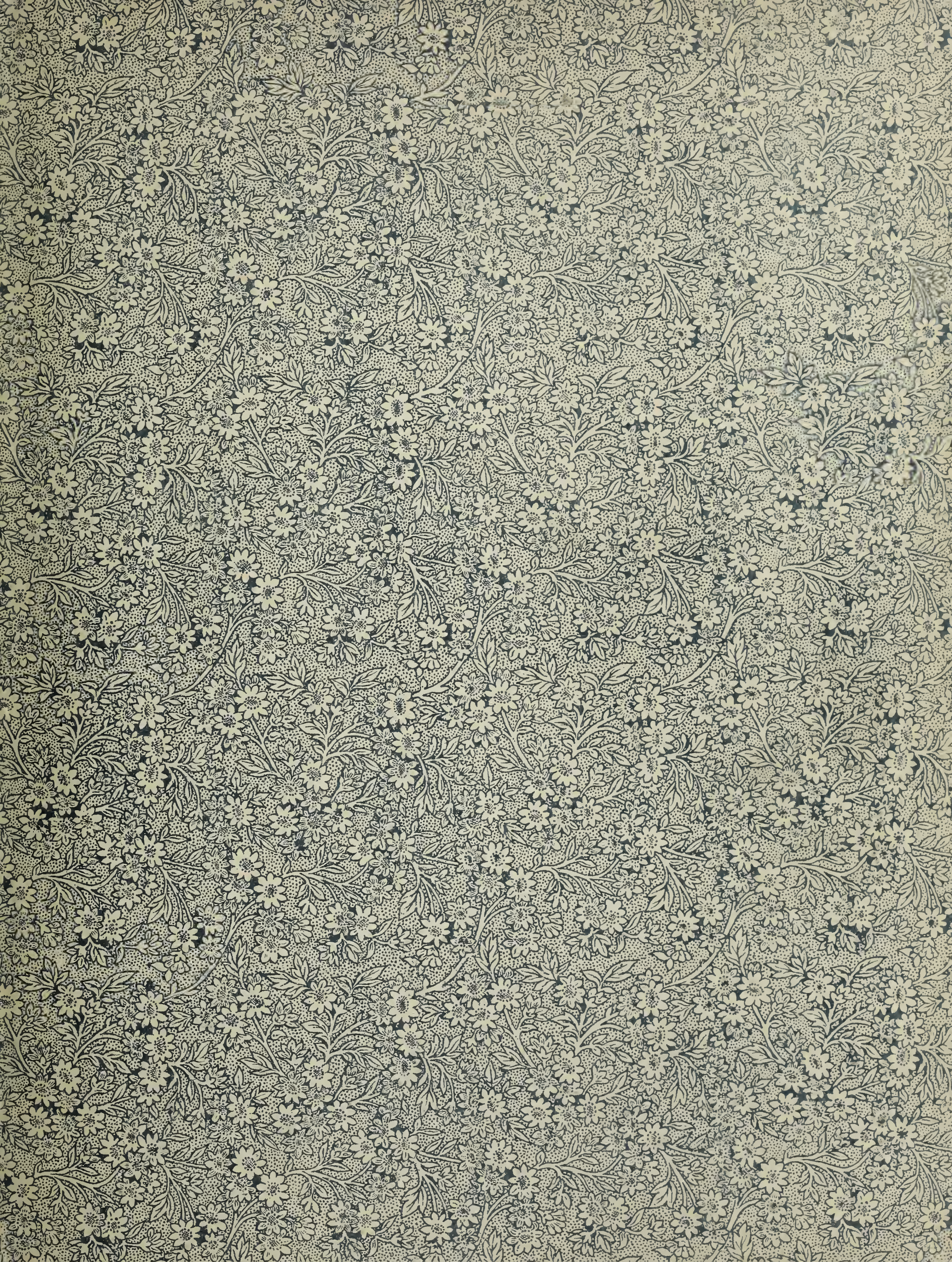

STORY OF
BIBLE LAND





Story of Bible Land

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PREFACE.

In my American home, on the Atlantic, on the Mediterranean, on camel's back, on mule's back, on horseback, under chandelier, by dim candle in tent, on Lake Galilee, in convent, at Bethel where Jacob's pillow was stuffed with dreams and the angels of the ladder landed, at the brook Elah, from which little David picked up the ammunition of five smooth stones, four more than were needed for crushing like an egg-shell the skull of Goliath, in the valley of Ajalon, over which, at Joshua's command, Astronomy halted, on the plain of Esdraelon, the battle-field of ages, its long red flowers suggestive of the blood dashed to the bits of the horses' bridles, amid the shattered masonry of Jericho, in Jerusalem that overshadows all other cities in reminiscence, at Cana where plain water became festal beverage, on Calvary whose aslant and ruptured rocks still show the effects of the earthquake at the awful hemorrhage of the five wounds

that purchased the world's rescue, and with my hand mittened from the storm, or wet from the Jordan, or bared to the sun, or gliding over smooth table, this book has been written.

On the steamer "City of Paris," mid-ocean, a stranger, knowing I was on the way to the Holy Land in order better to write a Life of Christ, was overheard to say: "I hope Dr. Talmage will write a Life of Christ which a business man, getting home at eight o'clock at night, and starting from home next morning at seven o'clock, may profitably take up, and in the few minutes before he starts and after he returns, read in snatches and understand." So shall it be. Not a word of Latin or Greek in all the book, unless it be translated. We shall tell the story in Anglo-Saxon, the language in which John Bunyan dreamed, and William Shakespeare dramatized, and Longfellow romanced, and John Milton sang, and George Whitefield thundered. What is the use of dragging the dead languages into the service of such a book? Sailing on the Atlantic Ocean I asked where did all this water come from, and answered it by saying, "The Hudson, the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, the Amazon, the Seine, the Tagus, the Guadalquiver." And so I thought all the rivers of language, freighted with the thought of all lands and all ages, have emptied into the ocean of Anglo-Saxonism. Blessed to me was the hour when my mother taught me how to frame the first sentence out of it, and my last word on earth shall be a draught upon its inexhaustible treasury.

WIDE THANKS.

The saddle-bags that hung over my horse all the way from Jerusalem to Damascus were filled with volumes to which I am obligated. In making this book I have, as far as time and ability would allow, ransacked the world of literature, sacred and secular, and I hereby

acknowledge my indebtedness to all who have helped fill up the reservoirs of information: Among others, to Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, Milman's History of Christianity, Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth, Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Dollinger's First Age of the Church, Kitto's Encyclopedia, Trench's Miracles and Parables, Lynch's Exploration of the Dead Sea, Guizot's Spirit of Christianity, Lightfoot's Revision of the New Testament, Strauss's New Life of Christ, Robinson's Biblical Researches, Atwater's Sacred Tabernacle, Thomson's Land and Book, Geikie's Life of Christ, Hanna's Life of Christ, Farrar's Life of Christ, Willitt's Miracles, Schenkel's Character of Jesus, Sweeney's Under Ten Flags, Young's Christ of History, De Pressense's Jesus Christ, Tischendorf's Synopsis of the Gospels, Stanley's Sinai and Palestine, Field's Among the Holy Hills, Hervey's Genealogies of Our Lord, Plumptre's Christ and Christendom, Prime's Tent Life in Palestine, Bishop Wordsworth's Four Gospels, Clark's Rambles Among Ruins, Stuart's Capernaum, Taylor's Life of Christ, Macduff's Brighter than the Sun, Eddy's Immanuel, and personal friends.

The book is now launched. May the prayers of all good people waft it on a happy voyage.

T. De Witt Talmage







SUMMIT OF MOUNT TABOR.

CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER V.



PLAIN OF JERICHO.—From Photograph.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VII.



HOG-SKIN WATER BOTTLE.—From Photograph. (35)



JACOB'S WELL. – From Photograph.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHAPTER XXVI.

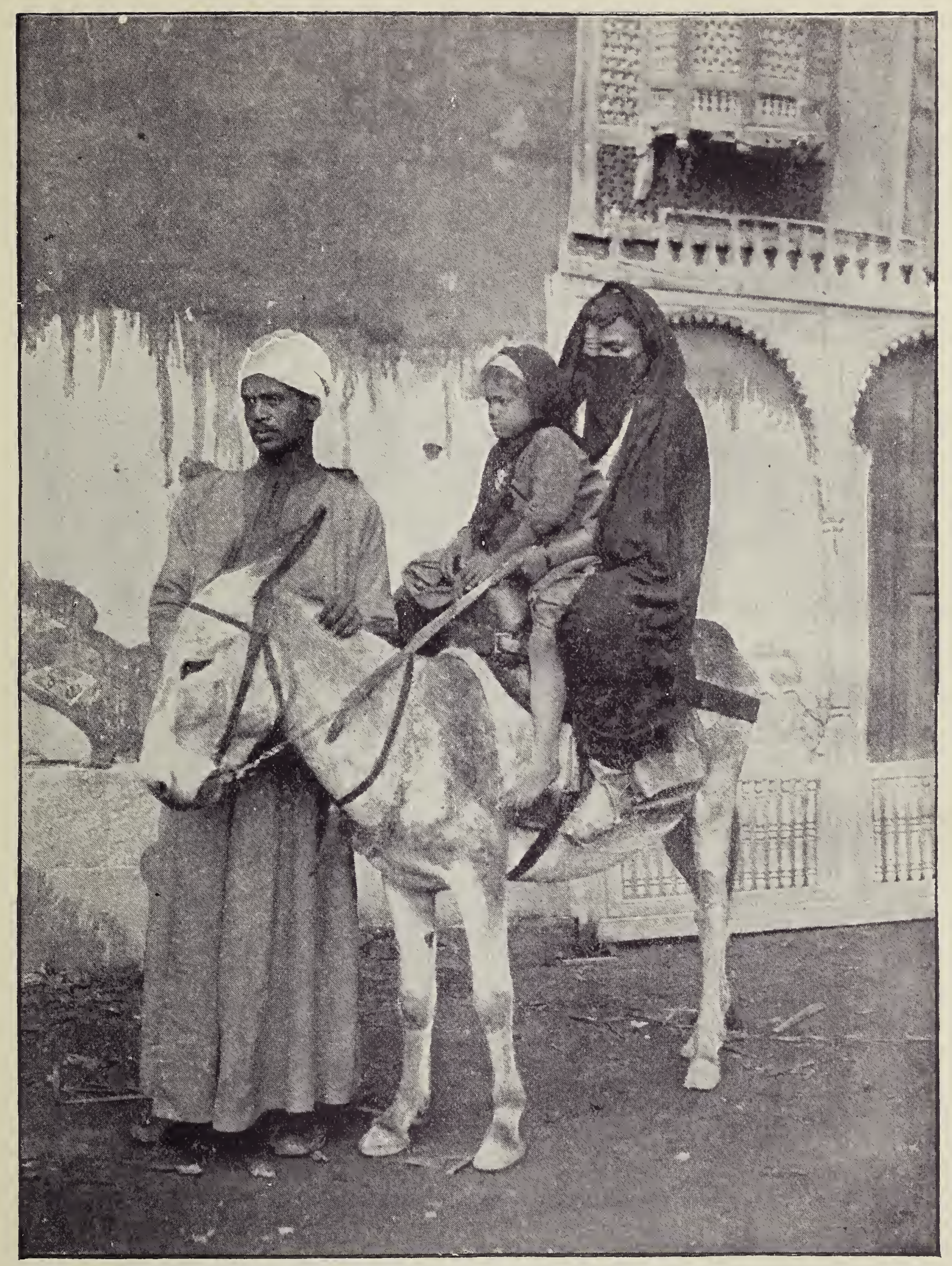
CHAPTER XXVII.

CONCLUSION.



FOUNTAIN IN CANA OF GALILEE.—From Photograph.





A MODERN FAMILY OF PALESTINE TRAVELING AS JOSEPH AND MARY DID.—From Photograph.

Travels in... the Orient...

OTHERS might write a Life of Christ without seeing the Holy Land, but I could not. So in October, 1889, I embarked for that sacred country, accompanied by my wife, daughter and my friends Mr. and Mrs. Louis Klopsch, determined to see with my own eyes, and press with my own feet many of the memorable places connected with the life of the patriarchs and the ministrations of our Lord.

We were told that as we proposed crossing the Atlantic at that season we should have a very rough passage and that as we were to cross the Mediterranean in winter we should suffer from appalling marine treatment, and that we would freeze in the Holy Land. Just the opposite has been our experience. We had crossed the Atlantic eight times before, but this was the smoothest of all our voyages—sunshine from New York to Liverpool, sunshine from Liverpool to Rome, sunshine from Rome to Athens, sunshine from Athens to Egypt.

In a small boat, pitching till it threatened to capsize us, we come ashore at Patras, Greece, and take rail-train for Corinth and Athens, the skies blue as the bluest, and the sea a deep green, save where it is white-crested. We enter now the realm of the classics. What an opportunity, if at the close of college course and before entering a profession every young man could take a journey to see the places vividly associated with the birth, the life and the writings of the ancient poets, essayists and orators. May some philanthropist with large means see the opportunity and embrace it for hundreds and thousands of young students!

But now we rush along on a rail-train in regions where Paul went afoot. What a contrast between the fatigues and slowness of ancient travel and the comforts and velocities of the modern journey; the difference between weary limbs and ptarmigan's pinion. But why tarry at all on my way to Palestine amid these Pauline scenes? I want gradually to come upon the Christly places. Beside that, Paul was only a sublime echo of Christ. Nothing but the divine occurrences of Palestine could make the Apostle's life possible. There would

have been no epistle to the Corinthians if there had been no sermon on the Mount. Mars' Hill was blood relation to Calvary. The spear that pierced the sacred side had answering flash in the beheading sword on the road to Ostia. The foot that bled on the hill back of Jerusalem was followed by the bleeding foot of the Pauline pilgrimage through this Grecian peninsula.

The scenery through which we are now riding is for grandeur absolutely appalling. No sooner does the Mediterranean subside at the beach, than the knolls become hills, and the hills mountains, and the mountains a volcanic bombardment of the heavens. Surely the stage on which martyrdoms were enacted was grand enough for the mighty tragedies! We come to Corinth. What a solemn place it is to me! All the ancient city gone, but the Acro-Corinthus, the fortress two thousand feet high, still standing. It not only looks down upon a vast realm of scenery but looks down upon the ages. Paul's eyes were lifted toward that proud eminence as he came from the mobocracy of Athens. The fortress is a great heap of black basalt. O thou doomed and dead and buried Corinth! Thy splendor was overpowered by thy dissoluteness. Yet all is quiet now, and, but for the clouds built like another Acro-Corinthus above the fortress, it is a rather peaceful scene, birds flying, sheep pasturing, peasant women sewing. It was the same landscape on which Paul looked on his gradual progress to martyrdom for Christ's sake.

One o'clock a. m., at Athens.—Cannot sleep; and I might as well be writing. Who could sleep amid such circumstances? Yesterday I saw the Acropolis, and preached on Mars' Hill, and after dark went out and wandered among the fifteen immense pillars which are the survivors of the one hundred and twenty that surrounded the temple of Jupiter Olympus. From the Acropolis I saw the same scene where the great sea-fight of Salamis occurred, saw the Pentelicon mines, the birthplace of temples; saw nearly to the battlefield of Marathon, saw the Parthenon, saw the two miles of circle which swept around a greater congregation of temples and architectural wonders and sculptured exquisiteness than were ever crowded into the same space. Saw twenty centuries of columns, columns standing, columns fallen, columns beginning to fall, the ages piled up in Pentelicon marble, everything old, terrifically old, overwhelmingly old. It looks like a wrecked eternity. Have read about the Acropolis all my life and have seen pictures of it, but find it a surprise unspeakable. Doxologies in stone. The eloquence and poetry and art of two millenniums frozen into marble. All honor to the memory of Ibitnos and Killikrates, the architects who planned it, and Phidias who chiseled it, and Pericles, under whose patronage it was lifted.

But this secular classic of the Acropolis did not move me like the Gospel classic of Mars' Hill. What a bold man was Paul to stand there on those



HILL OF MARS.—From Photograph.

tumbled rocks and say what he did! I suppose he could be heard across to the Acropolis, which was covered with temples to heathen gods and goddesses. An Englishman standing there said he heard distinctly what I said while I was preaching on Mars' Hill.

As Paul's voice rang out over the valley, between Mars' Hill and the Acropolis, he swung his hand toward that pile of heathen divinities and announced his belief in only one divinity, saying: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." And then looking up at the glittering idols on the higher hill he continues: "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device; and the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." No wonder that meeting broke up in a riot, and that Paul had to clear out and go to Corinth, from which we came day before yesterday. It was not yesterday afternoon so much that the wind fluttered the leaves of my Bible as I was speaking about that address of Paul on Mars' Hill, as it was emotion that shook the book when that Apostolic scene rose before my imagination. I obtained a block of stone from Mars' Hill to be sent to Brooklyn for the pulpit table in our new church, now building. But has this Paul nothing to do with the blessed One whose life I am trying to write? Yes. Paul was Jesus Christ's man. Mars' Hill shall be to us only a stepping-stone to Golgotha.

We were presented by Mr. Tricoupi, Prime Minister of Greece and the chief statesman of that kingdom, to the Queen of Greece, who gave us a most cordial grasp of the hand and welcomed us to Greece. The Queen is a very beautiful and gracious woman, and we talked together as though we were old friends. We met also the ex-Empress of Germany, Fredericka. I was never so favorably impressed with any distinguished woman as with her. She had on not a single jewel, was in plain black, dignified, but not coldly so, with a countenance that indicated good sense and kindness, but it was a somewhat tearful face. This may have been partly due to the fact that she was leaving her newly-married daughter in Athens. But I think the sadness of the face was consequent upon the multitude of troubles through which she had passed, the long and terrible sickness and death of Frederick, and many other griefs, domestic and political.

Across the Mediterranean.

Now we are on the Mediterranean Sea. This morning we sailed by Crete, the island spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles; where Paul "desired to winter," and near which they met the euroclydon, by which they "were driven up and down in Adria," until shipwrecked. "Ye should not have loosed from Crete, and have gained this harm and loss." The engineer of our boat told me that



EXTERIOR OF THE GATE OF ST. STEPHEN, JERUSALEM.—From Photograph.

This is the gate through which St. Stephen was conveyed to be stoned to death.

cyclones now are sometimes met in the same quarter. He says: "The winds have a terrible sweep along that coast of Crete." We are having a smooth sea, but there is a rocking and a narrowness of limits on shipboard which make me long for shore. There are Mohammedans on board. To-day at noon, regardless of spectators, they went through their devotions, first washing face and hands and feet, then reciting their prayers, kneeling and putting their foreheads to the rug which they had first spread beneath them. Their behavior is a rebuke to Christians who, under such circumstances, would neglect or postpone their devotions. Whatever else the Mohammedan neglects, he does not neglect his genuflexions.

A Trip Through Egypt.

Now we enter Africa. Though a curse was of old pronounced upon those who went down into Egypt for help, it cannot be that the malediction was intended for those who go down into Egypt for help in writing a life of Christ. So I went. Some of our Lord's most important years were spent in Africa. What a morning was the 25th of November, 1889, for new and thrilling experiences, for then I first saw Egypt. I landed at Alexandria amid a Babel of voices; the boatmen clamoring for our luggage; the Pasha, with his five wives, descending the ladder on the side of the steamer; custom-house officers on the alert; friends rushing aboard to greet friends; Europeans, Asiatics and Africans commingling. After a few hours' wandering about, and looking at Pompey's Pillar which has stood as the sentinel of twenty-six centuries, and through the gardens of the Khedive, and through streets filled with people of strange visage and costume, we sleep an hour to regain equilibrium before taking the train for Cairo.

Now the train is rolling on through regions watered by canals and ditches that make the Nile the mightiest of aquatic blessings, through a country that otherwise would not yield food for one hungry man in all the land. We find here by irrigation the luxuriance of an American farm just after a spring shower. These Egyptian lands without a drop of rain direct from the heavens, have been drinking until they can drink no more. Thank God for water, canals of it, rivers of it, lakes of it, oceans of it, all the cups of the earth, and all the bottles of the sky at times overflowing! We meet processions of men and beasts on the way home from the day's work. Camels, dromedaries, mules and cattle discharged of their burdens. But alas! for the homes to which the poor inhabitants are going. For the most part, hovels of mud. But there is something in the scene that thoroughly enlists us. It is a novelty of wretchedness, a scene of picturesque rags. For thousands of years this land has been under a very damnation of taxes. Nothing but Christian civilization will ever roll back the



TREE OF ABRAHAM, HEBRON.—From Photograph.

influences which are "spoiling the Egyptians." There are gardens and palaces, but they belong to the rulers. This is the land in which Joseph and Mary and Christ were fugitives.

Wondrous Sights in Egypt.

On the Mediterranean steamer coming from Athens to Alexandria, I met the eminent scholar and theologian, Doctor Lansing, who for thirty-five years has been a resident of Cairo, and he told me that he had been all over the road that the three fugitives took from Bethlehem to Egypt. He says it is a desert way and that the forced journey of the infant Christ must have been a terrible journey. Going up from Egypt, Doctor Lansing met people from Bethlehem, their tongues swollen and hanging out from the inflammation of thirst, and although his party had but one goat skin of water left, and that was important for themselves, he was so moved with the spectacle of thirst in these poor pilgrims that, though it excited the indignation of his fellow travelers, he gave water to the strangers. Over this dreadful route Joseph and Mary started for this land of Egypt. No time to make much preparation. Herod was after them, and what were these peasants before an irate king? Joseph, the husband and father, one night sprang up from his mattress in great alarm, the beads of sweat on his forehead, and his whole frame quaking. He had dreamed of massacres of his wife and babe. They must be off that night, right away. Mary put up a few things hastily, and Joseph brought to the door the beast of burden, and helped his wife and child to mount. Why, those loaves of bread are not enough, those bottles of water will not last for such a long way. But there is no time to get anything more. Out and on. Good-bye to the dear home they expect never again to see. Their hearts break. It does not need that ours be a big house in order to make us sorry to leave it. Over the hills and down through the deep gorge they urge their way. By Hebron, by Gaza, through hot sand, under a blistering sun, the babe crying, the mother faint, the father exhausted. How slowly the days and weeks pass. Will the weary three ever reach the banks of the Nile? Will they ever see Cairo? Will the desert ever end? When at last they cross the line beyond which old Herod has no right to pursue, their joy is unbounded. Free at last. Let them dismount and rest. Now they resume their way with less anxiety. They will find a place somewhere for shelter and the earning of their bread. Here they are at Cairo, Egypt. They wind through the crooked streets which are about ten feet wide, and enter the humble house where I have been to-day. It is nine steps down from the level of the street. It is such a place as no reader of this book would like to dwell in. I measured the room and found it twenty feet long, and seven and a half feet high. There are three shelvings of rock, one of which I think was the cradle of our Lord. There is no window,

and all the light must have come from lantern or candle. What a place for the King of heaven to live in!

Monuments of the Ages.

During the two or more years when this family of three made it their home, I suppose they occasionally walked forth and found many things looking about



CHILDREN OF PALESTINE.—From Photograph.

as I saw them to-day. As now, there stood the Sphinx with a cold smile, looking down upon the ages. It was old when the distinguished three arrived from Bethlehem in Egypt. It took three thousand years to make one wrinkle in its red cheek. It was then, as now, dreadful for its stolidity. Its eyes have never wept a tear. Its cold ears have not listened to the groans of the Egyptian

nation, the sorrows of which have never ceased. Its heart is stone. It cared nothing for Joseph or Mary in the first century. It will care nothing for the man or woman who looks into its imperturbable countenance in the last century. Within the sight of the Bethlehem pilgrims there also stood the Pyramid of Cheops, from the top of which you may see the Ruins of Memphis, the living and dead Cairos, the Nilometer, that skillful finger of stone which feels the rising and falling pulse of the great river; the place where Moses lay in the boat caulked with bitumen; the deserts of Africa, which have swallowed up in their thirsty sand explorers, caravans and armies. Yes, the immortal three from Bethlehem gazed at the outside of palaces, which within were the most gorgeous of the earth; palaces aflame with red sandstone, entered by gateways that were guarded with pillars; bewildering with hieroglyphics and wound with brazen serpents, and adorned with winged creatures, their eyes and beaks and pinions glittering with precious stones. There were marble columns blooming into white flower buds; there were stone pillars, at the top bursting into the shape of the lotus when in full bloom. Along the avenues, lined with sphinx and fane and obelisk, there were princes who came in gorgeously upholstered palanquin, carried by servants in scarlet, or else drawn by vehicles, the snow-white horses, golden-bitted and six abreast, dashing at full run. There were fountains from stone-wreathed vases, climbing ladders of light. You would hear a bolt shove, and a door of brass would open like a flash of the sun. The surrounding gardens were saturated with odors that mounted the terrace and dripped from the arbors and burned their incense in the Egyptian noon. On floors of mosaic, the glories of Pharaoh were spelled out in letters of porphyry and beryl and flame. There were ornaments twisted from the wood of the tamarisk, embossed with silver breaking into foam. There were beds fashioned out of a single precious stone. There were chairs spotted with the sleek hide of leopards. There were sofas footed with the claws of wild beasts and armed with the beaks of birds. As you stand on the level beach of the sea on a summer day and looking either way see miles of breakers white with ocean-foam dashing shoreward, so it seems as if the sea of the world's pomp and wealth in the Egyptian capital flung itself up in breakers of white marble, temple, mausoleum and obelisk. Yet, Egypt which had so much grandeur and glory for her rulers had only a room twenty feet long and seven and a half feet high for the infant Monarch of the skies.

The Mummy of Pharaoh.

We saw Pharaoh to-day. The very one that oppressed the Israelites. His body lies in the museum at Cairo. Visible are the very teeth that he gnashed against the Israelitish brickmakers, the sockets of the merciless eyes with which he looked upon the overburdened people of God, the hair that floated in the

breeze off the Red Sea, the very lips with which he commanded them to make bricks without straw. Thousands of years after, when the wrappings of the mummy were unrolled, old Pharaoh lifted up his arm as if in imploration, but his skinny bones cannot again clutch his shattered sceptre.

On a camel's back on the way to Memphis, Egypt, I am writing this. How many millions have crossed the desert on this style of beast! Proud, mysterious, solemn, ancient, ungainly, majestic and ridiculous shape, stalking out of the past. The driver with his whip taps the camel on the fore-leg and he kneels to take you. But when he rises, hold fast, or you will first fall off backward as he puts his fore-feet in standing position, and then you will fall off in front as his back legs take their place. Not a house or an inhabitant in all Memphis, though it was the mightiest city under the sun. I bring away a few stones from Pharaoh's palace, and recall, as well as I can, the once gorgeous capital of Egypt.

Over the Way of the Israelites.

From Memphis back again to Cairo, exhausted by travel, wearied by reflection on the mutations of the ages. But this morning, I especially thank God for sleep. I feel rested and buoyant. Sleep puts a bound to weariness. It says: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." It pours light into the eyes and geniality into the disposition and faith into the heart and makes a new world every morning. And now just think of it! We start out of Egypt for Canaan, the way the Israelites went thousands of years ago. But they went afoot, we with flying express train; they fugitive slaves, we American freemen; they amid the hardships that slew most of them, we amid the luxuries of modern travel for recuperation and sight-seeing. What a compliment to modern civilization and the principles of liberty which have begun to range the world! No; I can put it in a more righteous way: what obligation we are under to the blessed God and our glorious Christianity! Farewell, land of Pharaoh and Joseph and Jacob, and the regions through which the infant Christ passed both ways, from Palestine to Egypt, and from Egypt to Palestine!

Battlefield of Tel-el-Kebir.

Now we are passing through Goshen, the land into which Pharaoh turned Jacob's cattle. It is still flowing with milk and honey. Where the grass ends the crops begin. Cattle browsing, camels laden on the way to the markets, palm trees and cactus, acacia and sycamore, line the way. Some of the dark-faced farmers gathering the old crops, others planting for new crops. "So the ploughman overtakes the reaper." But this verdant and foliaged farm scene is surrounded by desert, and into that we pass and arrive at Tel-el-Kebir, the great battlefield where the English, under Wolseley, and the Egyptians met, and from

which field the only harvest ever reaped was an awful harvest of immortal men. Over these sands, not in this balmy atmosphere, but in consuming summer, the hosts of Englishmen marched and fought and fainted and died. On one side is a fenced and shaded cemetery, with marble headstones, in which many of the officers sleep the last sleep. But many of the troops, the thousands of private soldiers who had fathers and mothers and wives and sisters and children, are in trenches where they were tumbled, far away from home and without a prayer. The siroccos of this African desert will make playthings of the skeletons of the fallen cohorts.

Now we are on the Suez Canal. Between Egypt and Arabia we are sailing over this wonderful sheet of water which marries the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. We have just passed a great ocean steamer that has on it all the marks of wrestling with mighty waters. Wonderful De Lesseps, that he should have had this canal in his brain before he projected it in the presence of all nations. What independence of character, what courage, what persistence it all implies on his part. What a grand thing for a man to do that which all the world pronounces impossible. How many hands, how many spades, how many weary arms and shoulders and feet were required for a work like this! I am impressed all along this route with the fact that in eight days the Israelites would have reached Canaan if they had gone straight, though it took them forty years. But it was best that they be lost in the wilderness. They were a nation of slaves, and had they gone into Canaan thus undisciplined and unorganized, the nations of Canaan would have made only one meal of them. But they had forty years of schooling and became developed heroes and then were ready in the name of the God of Israel to defy and rout opposing hosts.

A Dangerous Harbor.

Glory to God in the highest, we have arrived at Joppa. Last night we made our exit from Egypt and have come through the sea dry-shod, and are now about to enter the "Promised Land," through the gates of Joppa. The sea is as smooth as a polished floor, although the harbor has the worst reputation for shipwrecks. The guide-books and all the tourists have prophesied a terrible debarkation at this place. The bottom of this harbor, they tell us, is strewn with human bones. Fifteen years ago a boat with twenty-seven pilgrims went down. But we personally know nothing against the harbor of Joppa. Hardly a ripple on the sea. Floods of sunshine. May all the rough stories about death prove in our cases as untrue, and our entrance into the promised land of heaven be as placid! May it be a radiant harbor! We are ashore and are met by people of many nationalities. While I am writing this, the air is full of fragrance, gardens all a-bloom though the first of December, and we are surrounded by acacia, tamarisk,



A MERCHANT OF PALESTINE.

oleander, palm, mulberry, century plant and orange groves, the oranges either ripe or ripening, the orange tree in March having both fruit and blossom, and all the year round in foliage, so that it fulfills the prophecy, "Their leaf also shall not wither."

On the back of hills Joppa is lifted toward the skies. It is as picturesque as it is quaint, and as much unlike any city we have ever seen as though it were in another world, Jupiter or Saturn or Mars. It comes out into the sea to meet one so that I felt like shouting to it in salutation from the deck of the steamer *Senegal*.

Jonah and the Whale.

We this morning disembarked where Jonah embarked. How vividly now the story comes to mind! God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and, declining that call, he came here to Joppa. I have been consulting some weeks past with tourist companies as to how I could take Nineveh on this trip. They have not encouraged me to go. It is a most tedious route and a desert. Now I see an additional reason why Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh. He not only revolted because of the disagreeable message he was called to deliver at Nineveh, but because it was a long way and rough and bandit-infested. So he came here to Joppa and took ship. But alas for the disastrous voyage. Why people should doubt the story of Jonah and the whale is more of a mystery than the Bible event itself. The same thing has occurred a thousand times. The Lord always has a whale waiting outside the harbor for a man who starts in the wrong direction. Recreant Jonah! I do not wonder that even the whale was sick of him.

Now the sun is sinking behind the hills, and my first day in Palestine is closing. Never will I forget Joppa, the city by the sea, city of architecturaled hill; city where Dorcas immortalized her needle and conquered death on her own pillow; and city where the two dreams of Peter and Cornelius met: and where Napoleon on the retreat had his sick soldiers poisoned because he could not take them down through Egypt; city at whose harbor floated the timber rafts for two temples, the ox-teams drawing through these streets the cedars for Jerusalem.

To-day I have seen floating the American flag, the English flag, the Russian flag, the Turkish flag, and the Mohammedan dropping his forehead to the earth in devotion, and all nations on the streets of one of the strangest cities I ever beheld.

This morning for the first time I have seen a man "take up his bed and walk." He had slept out of doors, and now he rolls together a blanket and pillow and a mattress, with a cord binds them securely, and then shoulders the bundle which he easily carries away.

All Aboard for Jerusalem.

Glad that we came now instead of some years hence, when much of the religious romance will have been banished forever. A banker of Joppa, assisted by others, is about to begin to build a railroad from Joppa to Jerusalem. When this railroad is done, the steam whistle will be heard at Joppa, and the conductor's cry, "All aboard for Jerusalem!" Then branch roads will be built and the cry will be "Twenty minutes for dinner at Nazareth," "Change cars for Damascus," "All out for the Grand Trunk to Nineveh," and camel and mule and dragoman will go their way, and lightning wheel will be substituted for hoof and diligence!

Now it is Monday morning, and we are on the way to Jerusalem. Along the route I am amazed beyond expression at the boldness and jaggedness of the scenery of the Holy Land. I expected to see it rough, but not Alpinian and Sierra Nevadian in grandeur. The hills are amphitheatres, piled-up galleries of gray rock, with intervals of soil brown and maroon, until the eye and head and heart surrender, and the lips that for a long time were exclamatory become speechless.

Before sundown we will see Jerusalem. I never had such high expectations of seeing any place as of seeing the Holy City. I found myself singing "Jerusalem, my happy home," while dressing myself this morning. I think my feelings may be slightly akin to that of the Christian just about to enter the Heavenly Jerusalem. My ideas regarding the earthly Jerusalem are bewildering. Have I not seen pictures of it? Oh yes, but they have only increased the bewilderment. They were taken from a variety of standpoints. If twenty artists attempt to picture Brooklyn or New York, they will plant their cameras at different places and take as many different pictures. I must see the city with my own eyes. I must walk around about it, and "tell the towers thereof."

On the Sacred Hill Golgotha.

Arrived in Jerusalem, the first place we seek is Mount Calvary.

This noonday hour on Golgotha is the most solemn and overwhelming hour of my life. I tried to read two of the Bible accounts of the Crucifixion, but it was done with many pauses. I defy any one on this spot to read with firm voice and consecutive utterance the description given by Luke and John of the mightiest scene of all the ages which was enacted here. Our group lying down on the place where the three crosses stood, I read to them, and I think the prayer of the penitent malefactor became the prayer of each one of us. "Lord, remember me." It was about this hour that the sun was darkened and midnight fell on midnoon. There can be no doubt that this hill above the place heretofore called "Jeremiah's Grotto," is the hill on which Christ was put to death. The late

General Gordon has made a mold of this hill, and the opinion being adopted by nearly all who visit Jerusalem in these days is that the hill on which we now sit was the place of the Great Tragedy. The New Testament calls the locality of execution, Golgotha, or the "*Place of a skull.*" I care not from what direction you look at this hill, you recognize the shape of a human skull—you have but to feel of your own cranium to realize the contour of Calvary. The caverns a little way beneath the top suggest eyeless sockets. The grotto underneath is also the shape of the inside of a skull. This hill is the only hill anywhere near Jerusalem that corresponds with the Bible description of being skull-shaped. We have inspired authority for saying that Christ was crucified outside the gate. This hill is just outside the Damascus Gate. Moreover, all traditions agree that this hill I speak of was the place where malefactors in olden time were put to death, and Christ was executed as a malefactor. The Bible lets us know that the Hill of Calvary was near a great thoroughfare, the people passing by "wagging their heads." This hill was then, as it is now, beside a great thoroughfare. The arguments in behalf of this particular hill as the place of the Lord's violent death are conclusive. In pamphlets and books those arguments are now appearing, and all intelligent people will yet agree upon this "*Place of a skull*" as the centre from which continents have been touched and from which all the world will yet be moved . So certain am I of this that to-day with my own hands I have rolled down from this hill a stone which I shall take to America as a memorial stone for my new church now building. That stone placed on top of a stone from Mount Sinai, for the obtaining of which camels are now crossing the Desert, will, after all the lips now living shall have become speechless, preach with two lips of stone the Law and the Gospel.

What a place of interest is Jerusalem, whichever way we look. It is the most sacred city of our planet. There is much squalor here now, but the present is, in my mind, overwhelmed with the past.

The Glory of Solomon.

The procession of kings, conquerors, poets and immortal men and women passes before me as I stand here. Among the throng are Solomon, David and Christ. Yes, through these streets and amid these surroundings rode Solomon, that wonder of splendor and wretchedness. It seemed as if the world exhausted itself on that man. It wove its brightest flowers into his garland. It set its richest gems in his coronet. It pressed the rarest wine to his lip. It robed him in the purest purple and embroidery. It cheered him with the sweetest music in that land of harps. It greeted him with the gladdest laughter that ever leaped from mirth's lip. It sprinkled his cheek with spray from the brightest fountains. Royalty had no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, flowers no sweetness,



RAILWAY STATION AT JERUSALEM.—From Photograph.

song no melody, light no radiance, upholstery no gorgeousness, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no mettle, architecture no grandeur, but was all his. Across the thick grass of the lawn, fragrant with tufts of camphire from Engedi, fell the long shadows of trees brought from distant forests. Fish-pools, fed by artificial channels that brought the streams from hills far away, were perpetually ruffled with fins, and golden scales shot from water-cave to water-cave with endless dive and swirl, attracting the gaze of foreign potentates; birds that had been brought from foreign aviaries glanced and fluttered among the foliage, and called to their mates far beyond the sea. From the royal stables there came up the neighing of twelve thousand horses, standing in blankets of Tyrian purple, chewing their bits over troughs of gold, waiting for the king's order to be brought out in front of the palace, when the official dignitaries would leap into the saddle for some grand parade, or, harnessed to some of the fourteen hundred chariots of the king, the fiery chargers with flaunting mane and throbbing nostril would make the earth jar with the tramp of hoofs and the thunder of wheels. While within and without the palace you could not think of a single luxury that could be added, or of a single splendor that could be kindled; down on the banks of the sea the dry-docks of Ezion-geber rang with the hammers of the shipwrights who were constructing larger vessels for a still wider commerce; for all lands and climes were to be robbed to make up Solomon's glory. No rest till his keels shall cut every sea, his axemen hew every forest, his archers strike every rare wing, his fishermen whip every stream, his merchants trade in every bazaar, his name be honored by every tribe; and royalty shall have no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, song no melody, light no radiance, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no mettle, upholstery no gorgeousness, architecture no grandeur, but it was all his.

To say that Solomon was a millionaire gives but a very imperfect idea of the property he inherited from David his father. He had at his command gold and silver in amounts that stagger all arithmetic. About his exact wealth authors have differed, but all agree that it was far ahead of any other man's possessions, beyond all modern millionairdom. The Queen of Sheba made him a nice little present of seven hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and Hiram made him a present of the same amount. If he had lost the value of a whole realm out of his pocket, it would have hardly been worth his while to stoop down and pick it up. He wrote one thousand and five songs. He wrote three thousand proverbs. He wrote about almost everything. The Bible says distinctly he wrote about plants, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that groweth out of the wall, and about birds and beasts and fishes. No doubt he put off his royal robes, and put on hunter's trappings, and went out with his arrows to bring down the rarest specimens of birds; and then with his fishing apparatus he went down to the stream

to bring up the denizens of the deep, and plunged into the forest and found the rarest specimens of flowers; and then he came back to his study and wrote books about zoölogy, the science of animals; about ichthyology, the science of fishes; about ornithology, the science of birds; about botany, the science of plants.

The Grief of David.

But here passes through these streets, as in imagination I see him, quite as wonderful and a far better man, David, the conqueror, the king, the poet. Can it be that I am in the very city where he lived and reigned? Yes, I have since coming here stood in the very place where he received the news of Absalom's death. He was wrapped up in his boy Absalom. He was a splendid boy, judged by the rules of worldly criticism. From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there was not a single blemish. The Bible says that he had such a luxuriant shock of hair that when once a year it was shorn, that which was cut off weighed over three pounds. But, notwithstanding all his brilliancy of appearance, he was a bad boy, and broke his father's heart. He was plotting to get the throne of Israel. He had marshaled an army to overthrow his father's government. The day of battle had come. The conflict was begun. David, the father, sat between the gates of the palace waiting for the tidings of the conflict. Oh, how rapidly his heart beat with emotion. Two great questions were to be decided: the safety of his boy, and the continuance of the throne of Israel. After a while a servant, standing on the top of the house, looks off and he sees some one running. He is coming with great speed, and the man on the top of the house announces the coming of the messenger, and the father watches and waits, and as soon as the messenger from the field of battle comes within hailing distance the father cries out. Is it a question in regard to the establishment of his throne? Does he say: "Have the armies of Israel been victorious? Am I to continue in my imperial authority? Have I overthrown my enemies?" Oh! no. There is one question that springs from his heart to the lip, and springs from the lip into the ear of the besweated and bedusted messenger flying from the battle-field—the question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" When it was told to David, the king, that, though his armies had been victorious, his son had been slain, the father turned his back upon the congratulations of the nation, and went up the stairs of his palace, his heart breaking as he went, wringing his hands sometimes, and then again pressing them against his temples as though he would crush them in, crying: "O my son Absalom! my son! my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom! my son! my son!" Stupendous grief of David resounding through all succeeding ages!

The Great Temple that Herod Built.

I am also thrilled and overpowered with the remembrance that yonder, where now stands a Mohammedan mosque, stood the Temple, the very one that Christ visited. Solomon's Temple had stood there, but Nebuchadnezzar thundered it down. Zerubbabel's Temple had stood there, but that had been prostrated. Then Herod built a temple because he was fond of great architecture, and he wanted the preceding temples to seem insignificant. Put eight or ten modern cathedrals together and they would not equal that structure. It covered nineteen acres. There were marble pillars supporting roofs of cedar, and silver tables on which stood golden cups, and there were carvings exquisite, and inscriptions resplendent, glittering balustrades and ornamented gateways. The building of this temple kept ten thousand workmen busy forty-six years. Stupendous pile of pomp and magnificence! But the material and architectural grandeur of the building were very tame compared with the spiritual meaning of its altars, its Holy of Holies, and the overwhelming significance of its ceremonies.

Where Elijah Was Fed by Ravens.

Now we are on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. We started out early and crossed the Jehoshaphat valley, which, if it had not been memorable in history and were only now discovered, would excite the admiration of all who look upon it, so deep, so wide, so long, so tunneled with graves, so overlooked by Jerusalem walls. With enough books in my saddle-bags, on a horse sure-footed for the mountain passes, and in good company, and within sight of Mount Olivet, and close by the Garden of Gethsemane, and with the heavens and the earth full of sunshine, we start on the famous road to Jericho. We pass through ravines and gorges, and by dark caves which might be an intrenchment for robbers like those which the man fell among on his way to Jericho along this very road. We have to-day met several groups of Bedouins, who, judging from their countenances, might be easily turned into bandits. But the supremacy of law, even though it be Turkish law, and our accompaniment of twelve stout men, escorts and attendants, put us out of the danger of being like that previous traveler, stripped and wounded and left half dead. What scenery we are passing through! How any man can be disappointed with the Holy Land I cannot understand. Some of the Palestine tourists have been chiefly impressed with the fleas, the filth and the beggars. To me the scenery, if it had no sacred associations, would be appallingly majestic. There is nothing in America or Europe that surpasses it for a mingling of beauty and grandeur. "What is that ravine?" I cry out to the dragoman. He says, "That is the brook Cherith; here is where the ravens fed Elijah." "Are there any ravens in this region now?" I asked. He answered, "Yes; they are large, in size between the buzzard and the eagle, and could carry



CHRIST ENTERING JERUSALEM.—*Gustav Doré.*

a heavy piece of meat if they tried." But how different is the brook Cherith from all my preconceived notions of it. It is like one of the awful gulches in Yellowstone Park. It is six hundred feet from the top to the bank. It has in its sides great caverns, where Bedouins make their home. The brook Cherith when in full force is a silver wedge splitting the mountains into precipices. But behold the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea bursting upon our vision, and in an hour we are at the two Jerichos, the one where, at the sound of the poor music played on "rams' horns," the walls crashed, and the other Jericho where short Zaccheus from the gallery of a sycamore tree hailed the Lord, and the Lord hailed him. It was here our Saviour so beautifully announced His mission, "The Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost." By the warmth of a campfire I sit down to write this, and looking up see the Quarantania, the mountain of Christ's temptation. I am at the foot of that "very high mountain" where Christ was "led up of the Spirit" to be tempted. Neither on the sides of it nor on the top is there a spear of grass or a flower. It is a desert mountain. Its robber dens are here visible. Amid these indentations and on the cold bleak heights, and alone, save when angels came to minister unto Him, Christ stayed in that awful struggle against pandemoniac cohorts which rode up to trouble and baffle and destroy, if they could, the Son of God. As on the top of the city temple Christ battling with temptation illustrated His willingness to sympathize with those who are struggling with city allurements, so by the memory of His contest here in lonely places He is willing to come to the rescue of those who in country places, or alone confront the Satanic. A depression on either side the mountain seems to divide it from the other ranges so that the mountain is itself alone. And now the sun is setting, making the mountains look like balustrades and embattlements of amber and gold, and the moon just above the crests seems to be a window of heaven through which immortals might be looking down upon the scene.

A Baptism in the Jordan.

Yesterday on horseback we left Jericho, and having dipped in the Dead Sea, we came with a feeling that we cannot describe upon the Jordan, a river which more people have desired to see than any other. On our way we overtook an American who requested me to baptize him by immersion in the river Jordan. We dismounted at the place where Joshua and his host crossed the river dry-shod. We were near a turn in the river and not far off from where rocks and sands are piled up in shape of cathedrals, domes and battlements. We pitched our tent, and after proper examination of the candidate for baptism, I selected portions of Scripture appropriate. One of our Arab attendants had a garment not unlike a baptismal robe. With that garment girdled around me, I led the candidate down under the trees on the bank, while near by were groups of friends and some

strangers who happened to be there. After a prayer, I read of Christ's baptism in the Jordan, and the commission "Go teach all nations, baptizing them." The people on the bank then joined in singing to the familiar tune that soul-stirring song:

"On Jordan's stormy bank I stand."

With the candidate's hand in mine, we waded deep into the Jordan, and I then declared, "In this historical river, where the Israelites crossed, and Naaman plunged seven times for the cure of his leprosy, and Christ was baptized and which has been used in all ages as a symbol of the dividing line between earth and heaven, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." As the candidate went down under the waves and then rose, I felt a solemnity that no other scene could have inspired. As the ordinance was observed under the direction of no particular denomination of Christians, and no particular church could be responsible for it, I feel it my duty to report what I did to the Church Universal.

On our way up from Jericho to Jerusalem the sun was very hot. I got off and sat under the shadow of the horse. I felt as if I could not ride another step, but the dragoman informed us that a little way off was a cool place. Soon we halted by a ledge of rocks, the mountain was between us and the sun, and threw a sombre blanket over us. And three or four of us spontaneously cried out: "This is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land!"

A Pilgrimage to the Birthplace of Christ.

Now we are back again in Jerusalem, and must make an excursion to our Lord's birthplace. At nine o'clock this crisp December morning, for there was a sharp frost last night, I am afoot on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem; I have just crossed the valley of Hinnom. It is deep and impressive, a wall of rock on one side and a steep hill on the other, mounting toward the Holy City, a few olive trees on the way up as though they had climbed as far as they could, and then halted. I pass the plain where Absalom marshaled troops against his father David, and the hill of Evil Council, where Judas planned for the capture of Christ. I am on the road where the wise men went to find Christ at the order of Herod, men wise enough not to make report to the cruel monster. It is the road that marks the distance between the birthplace and the deathplace of Him who made the world and will yet redeem it. Christ made long journeys, but after all, died within five miles of His early home. In all the region through which this road runs, the Davidic, Solomonic and Herodic histories overlap each other. I meet on the road many camels with heavy burdens on their way to Jerusalem. These animals set one thinking as does no other creature, and I enjoy meeting them on foot better than I enjoyed riding upon their backs. But now

Bethlehem is in sight, and we are toiling up the hills which Joseph and Mary ascended in this same month of December, long, long years ago. The town of Bethlehem, to my surprise, is in the shape of a horseshoe, the houses extending clear on to the prongs of the horseshoe, between which I look and see the fields where Ruth gleaned and Boaz was fascinated with her charms, and about which is garlanded the immortal pastoral which, in the Bible, lies peacefully between the war-lyrics of Judges and Samuel. Though David was a "man of war," his great-grandmother, Ruth, was a farmer's wife and a woman of peace. Near one end of the semicircle of rocks on which Bethlehem stands is David's well, now a wide, deep basin of stone, almost dry, but at certain seasons almost full. No wonder that when David was hounded of persecution and thirsty, he wanted a cool.draught out of it, crying: "Oh that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate." The mouth of the well cut out of the eternal rock is about four feet across from edge to edge, and a wet goat-skin bottle was lying near by. But we must not dwell too long on the topography of Bethlehem. Hills, hills, hills! Rocks, rocks, rocks! From the village, looking down, the backs of the mountains appear like the backs of the mountains of New Hampshire from the top of Mount Washington. The whole scene, more rough and rude than can be imagined. Verily Christ did not choose a soft and genial place in which to be born. But the scenery, though rough, is sublime, and the hills for width and precipitation are displays omnipotent. The gate through which our Lord entered this world was a gate of rock, a hard, cold gate, as the gate through which He departed was a swing-gate of sharpened spears.

By Sacred Places of the Holy Land.

Now we leave Jerusalem for the long journey north through Palestine. A little way out we got on a hill and took the last look at Jerusalem, and I felt and remarked it was the last look at that sacred city on earth, and the next Jerusalem we shall see will be the heavenly. We went on within sight of Mizpah and Gibeon, where Joshua commanded the sun to stand still; on by Rama, connected with Samuel's history; on by the traditional village where the parents of Christ missed their boy, about three and a half miles from Jerusalem. This is the road over which Jesus came and went from Jerusalem to Nazareth. To-night we encamp at Bethel, where was once a school of the prophets, a theological seminary. Elijah and Elisha were here. Near this Abraham and Lot divided the land. Here Jacob, pillowed on a stone, saw the ladder used by angels' feet, and he set up a stone and consecrated it. To-night the heavens were full of ladders, first a ladder of clouds, then a ladder of stars, and all up and down the heavens are the angels of beauty, angels of consolation, angels of God ascending



AN ENCAMPMENT IN THE DESERT.

From the collection of Mr. Gilbert Moss, Liverpool.

and descending. "Surely God is in this place," said Jacob, "and I knew it not." But to-night God is in this place and I know it.

The next night we encamp on the ruins of Ahab's ivory palace and within sight of the pillars of one of Herod's temples. But this place is more distinguished for Elijah's vision and the equipage of fire. The place is girt with a blue sash of mountains. The next day we saw the tomb of Joseph. His bones were brought up from Egypt. Gentile and Jew, Protestant and Catholic, and Mohammedan, agree that this is the place of that Prime Minister's burial. What a funeral it must have been and what a procession from Egypt to Canaan!

At the Well of Jacob.

We dismounted from our horses in a heavy rain at "Jacob's Well," and our dragoman on the slippery stones nearly fell into the deep chasm of this most memorable of all the wells ever digged. I measured the well at the top and found it six feet from edge to edge. Some grass and weeds and thorny growths overhang it. In one place the roof is broken through. Large stones embank the well on all sides. Our dragoman took pebbles and dropped them in, and from the time they left his hand to the instant they clicked on the bottom you could hear it was very deep. It is a rich region of land, "the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph," and I do not wonder the old patriarch bought it, for it is a farm field of great luxuriance, and however much he paid for it he got it cheap. Within sight, as we stood at the well, were Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, each eight hundred feet high, the mountains of cursing and blessing. The woman of Samaria, who met Christ at this well, told the truth, as my own eyesight testifies, when she said, "The well is deep," and no wonder she cried out, "Thou hast nothing to draw with." She knew not that Christ was speaking of spiritual supply. For that well God gives everyone a pail if he will only let it down into the floods. Within fifteen minutes of Jacob's well is the village called Sychar, to which the disciples had gone when the woman of Samaria came to the well, as He in the heat of twelve o'clock at noon asked to have His thirst slaked. The topography of the surroundings of this well and of other localities visited this week, led me to say then what I feel now: "Any man who goes through Palestine and remains an infidel, is either a bad man or an imbecile."

A Watering Place.

Six o'clock in the morning. Last night I heard a hyena. Its voice is a loud, resounding, terrific, almost supernatural sound, splitting up the darkness into a deeper midnight. Beginning with a howl and ending with a sound something like a horse's whinnying. Here we are, squat by a fire, under the starlight with two Arabs, I knowing as much of Arabic as they of English, namely,

nothing. Skies above the mountains of Samaria crimsoning with the morning. A few hours pass and we come to the well of Dothan, mentioned in Bible story. Cattle, donkeys, camels at the well. Women with pitchers on their heads or lowering their vessels to have them filled. Men with pails attached to strings struggling in pleasantry. The water splashing over the stones, while caravans of camels just arrived wearily lie down with a grunt and wait their turn for water. In the trough girding the well the mouths of beasts are thrust thirstily. There is Rachel watering the camels. There are young men and maidens looking at each other roughly bewitching. There are herdsmen angry with each other and ready to strike, and looking daggers because some other camel, or cow, or calf, or donkey, than their own, has won precedence at the trough.

A Plague of Dogs.

On the following night we encamped where I, for the first time, understood why the Bible writers have such dislike for dogs. The dogs of Palestine are an idiosyncratic race of curs. I am fond of dogs and like to pet them, but upon these I could not think of bestowing a friendly pat of the hand or an inviting whistle. First of all, they seem afflicted with parasites. They carry about with them insectile colonies. These unseen invaders, without right of lease or any kind of permission, make the poor dog a plateau for perpetual residence, and though the canine serves on them writ of ejectment they will not go. They fear neither bite nor growl nor scratch. They have made up their mind that the dog owes them a living. They enjoy his perturbation. They ask him what he intends to do about it. They particularly delight in ensconcing themselves where neither his tooth nor nail can touch them. They seem to have measured the distance and secured the exact spot. They play hide and seek with his nose. To take revenge for their tormentors these Arab dogs make the night hideous. I am writing this at midnight, because they will not let me sleep. Near my tent a dog began with a deep bass and that waked up a whole choir of voices on all keys. They let off whole volleys of racket. One would think that they would get hoarse or exhausted. But, no; when they stop it seems that the music required that they rest a few notes. But they come in a little further on, no more tired than a cornet that is being shaken and wiped while the performer is waiting for his next turn. But now they all come in together. This is the full band. This must be the chorus, voices deep, voices shrill, voices snappy, voices a-growl, voices defiant. Only those can fully appreciate my meaning who have encamped for the night in the outskirts of a Palestine village.

Next day we arrived at Gideon's Fountain, where the men lapped the water as they crossed. Out of an archway of rock the water bubbles. Yonder is Mount Gilboa, where Saul and his two sons died. This is the valley of Jezreel,

through which Jehu drove furiously. To-day we are in sight of Mount Carmel. It looks like rain, after a drought; clouds larger than a man's hand drifting across the top of Carmel. From a great height the mountain, first precipitately, then gradually, declines into the Mediterranean Sea.

At the Sepulchre.

As our caravan moved on at seven o'clock in the morning, through a village, we saw about fifty women, dressed mostly in black, on their way out of a graveyard; others were still seated by the graves and were crying, "Oh my mother! Oh my husband! Oh my child! Oh my father!" Our dragoman informed us that this was the continuance of a very old custom. The bereft women go at day-dawn to the grave, three mornings after a burial, and after that every week for a year. "There it is," I said. "Turn over and read in Luke and John, 'Very early in the morning they came unto the sepulchre.'"

To-day at noon, I said to our dragoman, "What is that?" pointing to an old square building in the distance. He replied, "That is a khan." Delighted was I to have an opportunity of seeing the kind of building in which Christ was born. We rode in under the arched entrance and dismounted. We found the building of stone, and around an open square, without roof. The building is more than two thousand years old. It is two stories high. In the centre are camels, horses and mules. Caravans halt here for the night or during a long storm. The open square is large enough to accommodate a whole herd of cattle, a flock of sheep or caravan of camels. The neighboring Bedouins here find market for their hay, straw and meats. Off from this centre, occupied by beasts of burden, there are twelve rooms for human habitation. The only light is from the door. I went into one of these rooms and found a woman cooking the evening meal. There were six cows in the same room. On a little elevation there was some straw, where the people sat and slept when they wished to rest. It was in such a room as that our Lord was born.

Memorable Spots.

Now we are at Nazareth, the place of the Saviour's boyhood. We came along the very road that Christ took when he returned from Jerusalem after his interview with the Doctors of the Law. Through the Valley of Esdraelon, the battlefield of nations; and by round-topped, beautiful Tabor, from the edge of which Deborah signaled Barak to open the battle; and near awful Megiddo, and across plains where nine hundred iron chariots rolled their lacerations and crushings; and within sight of where Sisera forsook the chariot and afoot fled until Jael nailed him; and within sight of where "the only son of his mother" was resurrected (and I know if the Lord could afford to make a Resurrection Day



CHRIST LEAVING THE PRÆTORIUM.—*Gustav Doré.*

for one young man, he can afford to make a Resurrection Day for all our dead); the same road in sight of Endor, where Saul went in the night to consult the witch and came to no good, as those who consult witches never do; and then the road comes to the foot of Mount Nazareth, not ascending by the steep and jagged path which Christ ascended, but by a new way which modern engineering has built, and we go zigzagging up the heights, steep above steep, until we seem to hover over Nazareth, a village of such overpowering interest that all the world has seen or wishes to see it.

How the Omnipotent has scooped out these valleys and molded these hills on which and through which Jesus, the lad, walked, sometimes with His father, sometimes with His mother, sometimes with village contemporaries, and sometimes alone. We halt at the very fountain where Joseph and Mary and Christ used to fill the goat-skins. We stop for the night at a Russian convent, and for the first time in many nights, have a pillow in-doors. Before dark I open my Bible and within sight of the hills to which the young Christ so often looked up, while they looked down, I read the story of Jesus of Nazareth, which appears so vivid and strange and new, it seems as if I had never read it before.

Jesus Afoot.

In traveling along the roads of Palestine, I am impressed as I could not otherwise have been with the fact that Christ, for the most part, went afoot. We find Him occasionally on a boat, and once riding in a triumphal procession, as it is sometimes called, although it seems to me that the hosannas of the crowd could not have made a ride on a stubborn, unimpressive and funny creature like that which pattered with Him into Jerusalem very much of a triumph. But we are made to understand that generally He walked. How much that means only those know who have gone over the distances traversed by Christ. We are accustomed to read that Bethany is two miles from Jerusalem. Well, any man in ordinary health can walk two miles without fatigue, but not more than one man out of a thousand can walk from Bethany to Jerusalem without exhaustion. It is over the Mount of Olives, and you must climb up among the rolling stones, and descend where exertion is necessary to keep you from falling prostrate. I, who am accustomed to walk ten or twelve miles without lassitude, tried part of this road over the Mount of Olives, and confess I would not want to try it often, such demand does it make upon one's physical energies. Yet Christ walked it twice a day, in the morning from Bethany to Jerusalem, and in the evening from Jerusalem to Bethany. Likewise it seems a small thing that Christ walked from Nazareth to Jerusalem, but it takes us four days of hard horseback riding, sometimes on a trot and sometimes on a gallop, to do it this week. The way is mountainous in the extreme. To those who went up to the "Tip Top House,"

on Mount Washington, before the railroad was laid, I will say that this journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem is like seven such American journeys. So, all up and down and across and recrossing Palestine, Jesus walked. Herod rode. Ahab rode. Saladin rode. Solomon rode. Antony rode. But Jesus walked. With swollen ankles, and sore muscles of the legs, and bruised heel and stiff joints, and panting lungs and faint head, along the roads and where there were no roads at all, Jesus walked.

Cana and Mount of the Beatitudes.

Now we are waiting for orders to mount for Cana of Galilee. We find in the village at a Greek convent some of the water-pots, or specimens of the same kind,



NATHAN AND DAVID.—Photograph of famous painting.

that were used at the famous wedding where Christ turned the contents of them from common water into grape juice. We were surprised at the size of these water-jars. I measured them and found them eighteen inches in width from edge to edge, and nineteen inches in depth. What a bountiful and strange vintage at that wedding. Not a grape, not a wine press, yet six of these great jars filled with a beverage richer than Malaga, and yet so harmless that after all the wedding banqueters had partaken till they could drink no more, there was in all the festal hall, not a flushed cheek, nor a glassy eye, nor a dizzy head, nor a

disturbed stomach. But let not the modern guzzler pat himself approvingly as though he were, in drinking wine, doing only what the Lord helped the people of Cana to do. There is not one drop of that kind of wine in any of the flasks, decanters, or rum jugs of the present day. Christ, by a glorious miracle, turned water into wine, but the devil by infernal miracle turns wine into suicide, and poverty, and assassination, and orphanage, and woe, and death. Take your choice of miracles.

The most fearful climb in Palestine is the ascent of the Mount of Beatitudes. The horses fairly groan with the effort of transporting one up the first mountain, which is only a stepping-stone to the Mountain of Blesseds. Then we ride across fields where every step seems a trap for the feet of the horses. They stumble with their fore feet, and knuckle with their back feet, until it is only by a stout grip of mane or saddle we stay on. But oh, what a sweep of vision, now that we have reached the top. It is like the Valley of the Hudson, from Catskill Mountain House. I am entranced. Hail, hills of Galilee! Hail, Lake Gennesareth! Yonder, clear up and most conspicuous, is Safed, the very city to which Christ pointed for illustration in the sermon preached here, saying, "A city set on a hill cannot be hid." There are rocks around me on this Mount of Beatitudes enough to build the highest pulpit the world ever saw. Ay, it is the highest pulpit. It overlooks all time and all eternity. The Valley of Hattin, between here and Lake Galilee, is an amphitheatre, as though the natural contour of the earth had invited all nations to come and sit down and hear Christ preach a sermon in which there were more startling novelties than were ever announced in all the sermons that were ever preached. To those who heard Him on this very spot, His word must have seemed a contradiction of everything they had ever heard or read or experienced. The world's theory had been, "Blessed are the arrogant; blessed are the supercilious; blessed are the tearless; blessed are they who have everything their own way; blessed are the war eagles; blessed are the persecutors; blessed are the popular; blessed are the Herods and the Cæsars and the Ahabs." "No! No!! No!!!" says Christ, with a voice that rings over these rocks and through yonder Valley of Hattin, and down to the opaline lake on one side, and the sapphire Mediterranean on the other, and across Europe in one way, and across Asia in the other way, and around the earth both ways, till the globe shall yet be girdled with the nine Beatitudes. But as we were climbing to the top, I could not help remarking to the one who rode next to me, "It is appropriate that the ascent to the Mount of the Saviour's Blesseds should be difficult, for some of the attainments commended there by our Lord are heights most difficult to reach. For instance: Who really loves his enemies? We may not wish them harm; indeed, you may wish them well. But there are not many who have a real affection for those who maltreat them. I never, personally, knew of but one person who

without doubt, gained the glorious height. That was David T. Talmage, my father. More like Christ was he than any person I ever knew, unless it were my mother. Dead, a quarter of a century, yet their example is to me pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. But such characters are not frequent. Loving your enemies is a grace not easily attained. Was I not right in saying to our dragoman, 'David, the Mount of Beatitudes is hard to climb.' "

A Funeral in the Holy Land.

We saw to-day a procession, mostly dressed in black, approaching. Soon we heard the wailing of many women. It was a sad moaning outcry. They followed an ornamented box which contained the dead body of a girl. At the front of the box was a pole on which was a sort of cap with locks of the hair of the deceased floating from beneath it. On the same covered pole were some adornments which I imagine had been worn by the deceased during her lifetime. The box was on the shoulders of four men. The procession of weeping women was led by one whom I supposed to be the mother of the dead child. She had in her hands a narrow piece of blue cloth about a yard long, which she lifted into the air, now by one hand and now by the other, and as if in effort to break it and no doubt carrying out the oriental custom of rending in grief. I thought I could see her sorrow was genuine, and it was the real mother bewailing her dead, and so no doubt there was as much heart-break in the lamentation as there is when an American mother bemoans her childlessness. There may also have been other relatives in the throng who were agonized. But the most of the crowd seemed to dramatize bereavement, and careful inspection discovered the tearless eyes, and that they were enacting something that seemed called for by the proprieties of the occasion. The corpse was carried into a sacred enclosure, and two or three men went through genuflexions which meant no doubt much to them but nothing to us; meanwhile the women of the procession sat down at the distance of a city block away from the enclosure, but the men sat nearer by. Then the box with the floating tresses of the departed girl was brought out and the procession resumed its march to the grave and the wild and bitter cry again ascended. I followed to the gates of the cemetery and was passing in, when my friend called attention to the fact that we had no right to enter. Some twenty of the women were, by angry voice and violent gesticulation, forbidding our going in. They evidently discovered that we were strangers and of another nationality and religion, and our intrusion would be a sacrilege. So we halted, but we had seen for the first time the type of an oriental burial. It was to us a deeply sad and solemn spectacle. No element of the ludicrous disturbed our minds as others have sometimes been impressed. While the grief of the mother stirred our sympathies, the affectation of sorrow by others was only what we have witnessed in civilized lands,

where sometimes a long row of carriages and a profusion of crape and costly silver handles to a casket mean nothing except that the funeral must be fashionable, although perhaps the most of the people in the procession are glad the old man is at last dead, for now there will be a distribution of his property.

Lake Galilee.

After having had on our breakfast-table fish from Galilee, like that which Christ gave broiled to His disciples after their night of "poor luck" in fishing. I spread my overcoat on the snow-white pebbles of the lake and began to read the Poems of the Evangelists, descriptive of what took place on or near these waters,



DAVID'S MEETING WITH ABIGAIL.—Photograph of celebrated painting.

more sacred than any that ever gleamed in any other bowl, whether of Divine or human sculpturing. A sail boat glides near, but as there is no wind, the sails are down and the oars propel the prow through the shattering crystal. Again Christ walks this lake, and He comes to me in a feeling of peace which He only can breathe into the soul. We can understand now how high winds can lift this lake. The cañons, as they are called in Colorado, or the wadys as they are called in Palestine, are invitations to hurricanes. Last night, from a calm that moved not a tassel of our tent, in one minute there rushed by a wind that tested every rope and pole of our encampment to the utmost, and blew away from the front of

our tent, not only the coals of our bonfire, but the ashes and the wood, and caused a fright of some of our group which called the dragoman, who prophesied that in twenty minutes it would be over, and sure enough in about that time there was not enough atmospheric motion to flutter a feather.

We are camped near the village of Tiberias. Many of the Lives of Christ say that Christ was never here. The Bible does not say He ever visited Tiberias, but it says: "Jesus went about all the cities and villages," and I have no doubt He visited this city, which was second to none in importance. Some authors say Christ did not come to Tiberias because it was populated by a very degraded people. This was the very reason that would have brought Him here; the worse the disease, the more need of a doctor. Yes, Christ was here! What more can God in His goodness grant me in the way of natural scenery and religious opportunity than that I should see this lake? I have walked its banks, read the Book of Luke in its presence, worshiped a whole Sabbath at its crystal altars, bathed in its depths, letting the sacred floods roll over me, and to-morrow will sail on its surface. When I first thought of coming to Palestine, I went to the Tourist Company in New York and, unrolling the map of the Holy Land, I took my pencil and made on it two circles, saying, "I may not have time to see all the Holy Land, but those two regions I must see." One circle was swept around Jerusalem and its approximates, the other circle around Lake Galilee and its approximates. I thank God that I have compassed what I came for and much beside.

A Ride on the Lake, and a Storm.

Now, on Monday morning, I am in a boat on Lake Galilee. One sail up and four oars plying. It has been raining in the night and a fog hangs over the waters, but the fine lace veil of the morning mist is lifted and the Gadarene shore on one side and the Tiberias Hills on the other are coming to revelation and look like the banks of the Hudson in late September, after the frosts have put their diligent and skillful pencil upon the foliage. Yes, on the right hand side are the very hills down which the swine ran when possessed of the devil. You see that Satan is a spirit of bad taste. Why did he not say, "Let me go into these birds," whole flocks of which fly over Galilee? No, that would have been too high "Why not let me go into the sheep which wander over these hills?" No, that would have been too gentle. "Rather let me go into these swine. I want to be with the denizens of the mire. I want to associate with the inhabitants of the filth. Great is mud. I prefer bristles to wings. I would rather root than fly. I like snout better than wing."

But the most of the memories of this sheet of water and its surroundings are elevating. What a sedative to Christ must have been a look at this lake after the hard religious work of the day. The air off the waters cooled His hot brow. Up

and down these banks our Lord walked, and the best society He ever had was when He was alone with the mountains and the sea. But suddenly, this Monday morning, the winds rise, and our boat begins to rock. Never before in any waters have I seen such a change in five minutes. The oarsmen toil hard at their places. Fortunately we are near our landing at Capernaum. If the winds and the waves increase for the next half hour as they have in the last ten minutes, and we were still out, our craft would be unmanageable and we would have to cry as did the disciples on the same lake, "Lord, save, or we perish." While our boat is thumping on the rocks, some of our oarsmen plunge waist deep in the water and carry ashore those of our party who do not wish to wade. All is well. Peace, be still.

Few people see the ruins of Capernaum to advantage, for in spring and summer tall weeds cover the entire place, and snakes, undisturbed, crawl over the beautiful sculpturing of the fallen architecture. But now the old city has its gloves off and gives us its bare hand as we approach it. We climb over the stones of the synagogue where Christ preached oftener than in any other building and which might have been called the scene of His pastorate. There, on one of the fallen walls, I saw the ancient sculpturing, representing a pot of manna, to which the people may have pointed when they said to Christ, "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert," and Christ replied, "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven."

The Mount of Transfiguration.

We are ending our Palestine journey. We will, in a few hours, pass into Syria and to Damascus, and then to Beyrout, and so homeward. Two more nights in tent. We have had all the conveniences and comforts of the most improved modern travel. Every evening in the long march we have found fires builded, tents spread and warm food ready, for the reason that most of our caravan starts an hour and a half earlier in the morning We detain only two mules for carrying so much of our baggage as we might incidentally need, and a tent for a noonday luncheon. We are encamped now by Lake Merom, in proximity to which Joshua fought his last great battle, scattering the allied kings in such utter rout as only an army experiences when the Lord comes down in all His might against them. This is the place where the horses were hamstrung. Mount Hermon is in sight, on its brow a crystal coronet of ice and snow, for it is winter now. But in April these snows will melt and the dew will take its place. "As the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever more." This Hermon was the Mount of Transfiguration then, and to-day, by the bright clouds and a rainbow hovering, it is again, in its beauty and glory and almost supernatural radiance, a Mount of Transfiguration.



THE CROWN OF THORNS.

A Blizzard.

This is our last day in Palestine. Farewell to its mountains, its lakes, its valleys. I feel myself worn with the emotions of this journey in the Holy Land. One cannot live over the most exciting scenes of eighteen hundred or four thousand years, without feeling the result in every nerve of his body. Beside that, it is a very arduous journey. Six and seven hours of horseback in a country which is one great rock, split and shattered and ground into fragments, some of them as large as a mountain and some of them as small as the sand of the sea. This afternoon we are caught in a tempest that drenches the mountain. One of the horses falls and we halt amid blinding rain. It is freezing cold. Fingers and feet like ice. Two hours and three-quarters before encampment. We ride on in silence, longing for the terminus of to-day's pilgrimage. It is, through the awful inclemency of the weather, the only dangerous day of the journey. Slip and slide and stumble and climb and descend we must; sometimes on the horse and sometimes off, until at last we halt at a hovel of the village, and instead of entering camp for the night, are glad to find this retreat from the storm. It is a house of one story, built out of mud. A feeble fire in mid-floor, but no chimney. It is the best house in the village. Arabs, old and young, stand round in wonderment as to why we come. There is no window in the room where I write, but two little openings, one over the door and the other in the wall, through which latter outlook I occasionally find an Arab face thrust to see how I am progressing. But the door is open and so I have light. This is an afternoon and a night never to be forgotten for its exposures and acquaintance with the hardships of what an Arab considers a luxurious apartment. We have passed from Palestine to Syria, and are spending the last night out before reaching Damascus. To-morrow we shall have a forced march and do two days in one, and by having carriages sent some twenty miles out to meet us, we shall be able to leave stirrup and saddle, and by accelerated mode reach Damascus at six or seven o'clock in the evening. Let only those in robust health attempt to take the length of Palestine on horseback. I do not think that it is because of the unhealthiness of the climate in the Holy Land that so many have sickened and died while here, or afterwards, but because of the fatigues. The number of miles gives no indication of the exhaustions of the way. A hundred and fifty miles in Palestine and Syria on horseback demand as much physical strength as four hundred miles on horseback in regions of easy travel. I am to-night in good health notwithstanding the terrible journey; and seated by a fire, the smoke of which, finding no appropriate place of escape, takes lodgment in my nostrils and eyes. For the first time in my life I realize that chimneys are a luxury, but not a necessity. The only adornments in this room are representations of two tree branches in the mud of the wall, a circle supposed to mean a star, a bottle hung from the ceiling, and about twelve indentations

in the wall, to be used as mantels, for anything that may be placed there. This storm is not a surprise, for through pessimistic prophets we have expected that at this season we should have rain and snow and hail throughout our journey.

For the most part it has been a bright and tonic atmosphere, and not a moment has our journey been hindered. Gratitude to God is to-night the prominent emotion. "Bless the Lord, O our souls, who redeemeth our lives from destruction."

On the Way to Damascus.

During the night the storm ceased and the next morning we rose at five o'clock, and at six o'clock were in the insufficient light feeling for the stirrups of our saddles. We are on the road to Damascus. Before night we will pass the place where Saul was unhorsed at the flash of the supernal light, and will enter that city, the mere name of which is full of suggestiveness, solemnity and historical agitation. We do not want on the journey to be flung to the earth; but oh, for some great spiritual blessing, brighter than any noonday sun, and a new preparation for usefulness !

At six o'clock this evening we arrive at Damascus. The long horseback ride through Palestine is ended. A carriage met us twenty miles out and brought us to the city. The impressions one receives as he rides along the walled gardens of the place are different from those produced by any other city. To-morrow we will explore and see for ourselves the place about which we have heard and read so much, the oldest city under the sun.

Our first night passed in Damascus, we were up early and abroad, and after some days of tarrying here, feel that we have seen Damascus, the "street called Straight," along which good Ananias went to meet Saul, the site of the palace of Naaman, the leper, the river Abana, as the other day we saw Pharpar, and have from the northwest of the city gazed upon this ancient metropolis that has had so much to do with the history of the world. The bazaars of this place could entertain us for weeks and months, but all these styles of articles have become a part of American bric-a-brac, or gone into the furniture and upholstery of the American parlor. Yet the people are as they have always been. No change in their headwear or sashes, or baggy and profuse coverings of their limbs. No one can imagine what Damascus is. Unlike all others in architecture, in merchandise, in general and minute appearance, it is worth while to cross the Atlantic and Europe to see it. Though it has been a place of battle and massacre and of ancient affluence and splendor, as well of present prosperity, to the Christian, its chief attraction arises from the fact that here the scales fell from Paul's eyes, and that chief of apostles here began that mission which will not end until heaven is

peopled with ransomed spirits. We took diligence from Damascus to Beyrout, a fourteen hours' journey, rain-washed, crowded and uncomfortable.

At Beyrout.

Christmas we spent in Beyrout, and I preached in the Scotch Presbyterian chapel of that city. The majority of the audience were Syrians, but they all understood English, and a more attentive people I never addressed. The music was superb, solos, anthems and congregational singing. I will never forget the kindness of Dr. Bliss, the president of the college and the illustrious educator; nor Dr. Jessup, the renowned missionary, and moderator in 1883 of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and a mighty agent for the transference of the best of Christian literature into Arabic; nor Dr. Post, the surgeon, the botanist, the Christian philosopher and prince of Christian workers. We dined at the hospitable home of Dr. Jessup and became acquainted with his lovely and accomplished family. It was an American Christmas dinner. At four o'clock we went on the steamer *Minerva* bound for Constantinople.

The next morning we found ourselves off the island of Cyprus. We took a boat and went ashore for three hours, visited the excavations from which Cesnola took his famous collection of antiquities, and walked the strange streets in which Paul and Barnabas went up and down when here preaching Christ to the people. At midnight we stopped at the island of Rhodes, staying on deck to catch a glimpse of it. The Colossus was not standing there to greet us, for it long ago fell and was broken up and sold, and nine hundred camels carried it away. We were not permitted to go ashore, but saw lights and nine boats came out to take freight and to bring three passengers. The next day we sailed by Coos. We noticed the wonderful consecutiveness in the statement in Acts xxi. The order of scenery is accurately observed. We are going in the opposite direction to that which Paul traveled. So it is with us Syria, Cyprus, Rhodes, Coos, Ephesus; while with him it was Ephesus, Coos, Rhodes, Cyprus, Syria. The record says that he left Cyprus on the left hand. We, coming in the opposite direction, left it on the right hand.

The Isle of Patmos.

We are approaching Patmos, the island of vision, where Domitian's prisoner and exile was given to see all the victories and all the woes, and all the horrors and all the raptures of earth and heaven going by him in a panorama, pleasing and blistered, and blackened and illumined. The Evangel John has made that island the most famous of all earthly islands. Not Scio, in which Homer lived, nor Samos, the birthplace of Pythagoras, nor Coos, in which Hippocrates was born, nor Rhodes in which the Colossus stood, nor St. Helena where Napoleon died, nor Guernsey in which Victor Hugo was banished, has been so famous



THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

either on earth or in heaven. Patmos is a rock sheer down, a plateau at the top reaching to the foot of another rock, that lifts its bare forehead to great height, then a long line of rock, sinking, rising, growing more defiant or subsiding into valleys in which there is no verdure, but only desolation and barrenness are cradled. The island is a place where an evangelist and other offenders against sinful authority might easily be starved. John's condition suggested no doubt much of the imagery of his inspired dream. As the famished are apt to dream of food, John writes of the deliverance of the righteous, saying, "They shall hunger no more." Plenty of water but most of it salt, the hot tongue of the evangelist thought of the liquid supplies of heaven, saying, "They shall thirst no more." The waves to-day are in commotion. A high wind is blowing the billows of the Mediterranean against the bluffs of Patmos, and each wave has a voice and all the waves together make a chorus, and so they may have done in John's time and become symbols of the multitudinous anthems of heaven, and he says they are "like the voice of many waters." But this morning the Mediterranean was very smooth. The waters were crystal and the sunlight seemed to set them on fire, and there was a mingling of white light and intense flame, and so some day while John looked out from his cavern home in yonder hillside he may have been led thereby to think of the splendors before the throne, and he speaks of them as the "sea of glass mingled with fire."

On to Ephesus.

Arriving at Smyrna we disembark and enter a rail-train for Ephesus. From the depot of that city we took horse and went first to the ruins of one of the seven churches of Asia, then to the theatre, then to the gymnasium. The interest in Ephesus is surpassed by no other city, so intensely apostolic, Pauline and Johannian. Imagine our feelings when we stood in the theatre where Paul "fought with beasts at Ephesus," for I suppose he had such contest literally as well as figuratively.

Embarking again, the next place we went ashore was at the island of Mitylene. The Greek consul took us to see the city and introduced us to the archbishop of the Greek Church and the governor of the island at their residences. We visited also the ancient fort. I felt quite at home when I found many of my sermons on the table of the consul. We sailed along by Troas, the place where Paul left his overcoat. This persuades me that it was not at this season of the year he visited that place. No man would either forget or leave his overcoat in cold crisp weather like that of this morning. You remember he wrote "The cloak which I left at Troas bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments."

Tradition, History and Fact.

Are the places that I see in Palestine and Syria and the Mediterranean isles the genuine places of Christly, patriarchal and apostolic association? Many of

them are not, and many of them are. We have no sympathy with the bedwarfing of tradition. There are traditions contradicted by their absurdity, but if for several generations a sensible tradition goes on in regard to events connected with certain places, I am as certain of the localities as though pen and document had fixed them. Indeed, sometimes tradition is more to be depended on than written communication. A writer may, for bad purposes, misrepresent, misconstrue, misstate, but reasonable traditions concerning places connected with great events are apt to be true. I have no more doubt concerning the place on which Christ was crucified, or in which Christ was buried, than I have about the fact that our Lord was slain and entombed. But suppose traditions contradict each other? Then try them, test them, compare them as you do documents. It is no more difficult to separate traditions, true and false, than apocryphal books from inspired books. Do not use the word tradition as a synonym for delusion. There is a surplus of Christian infidels traveling the Holy Land who are from scalp to heel surcharged with unbeliefs. A tradition may be as much divinely inspired as a book. The scenery of Palestine is interjoined, intertwisted and interlocked with the Scriptural occurrences. The learned Ritter, who has never been charged with any weakness of incredulity, writes: "No one can trace without joy and wonder the verification which geography pays to the history of the Holy Land."

When the brilliant Renan went to Palestine he was stuffed with enough incredulity to make a dozen Thomas Paines, and yet he gives the following experience: "The marvelous harmony of the evangelical picture with the country which serves as its frame, were to me a revelation. I had before my eyes a fifth gospel, mutilated but still legible; and ever afterwards, in the recitals of Matthew and Mark, instead of an abstract being that one would say had never existed, I saw a wonderful human figure live and move." So said an unbeliever. In this, my visit to Palestine, in the year of our Lord 1889–90, I also find the landscape a commentary. The rivers, the mountains, the valleys, the lakes, the rocks, the trees, the costumes of the Holy Land, agree with Matthew and Mark and Luke and John. The geography and topography are the background of the Gospel pictures. They carry a different part of the same song. Admit Palestine and you admit the New Testament. A distinguished man, years ago, came here and returned, and wrote: "I went to Palestine an infidel, and came home a Christian." My testimony will be, that I came to Palestine a firm believer in the Bible, and return a thousand-fold more confirmed in the Divinity of the Holy Scriptures.

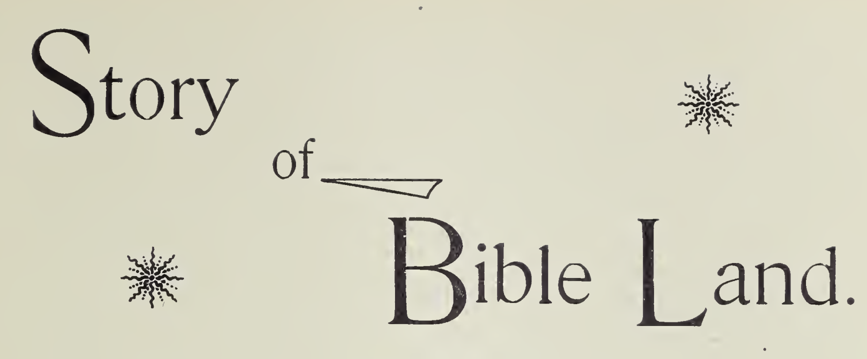
Christ, the Out-Door Teacher.

What I saw of the Christly and apostolic regions on this journey to the Orient leads me to say that it was an open-air religion that Jesus founded.

Indeed, the religion of the Old Testament and New was an out-of-door inauguration. Foreseeing that the whole tendency of the human race would be toward a religion of Tabernacles and Temples and Synagogues and Churches, the two greatest things ever written, namely, the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, were delivered in the open air. No depreciation of consecrated edifices, but all places consecrated where a good word is spoken or a merciful deed done. What were Christ's pulpits? Deck of ship, pebbly beach of sea, black basalt of volcanic region, mouth of cavern, where mad man was undeviled; crystallized wave, strong enough to uphold the storm-tamer; split sarcophagus, where death had been undone; the wilderness, where a boy became the commissary or provider for a whole army of improvidents. You see the world needed a portable religion, one that the business man could take along the street, the farmer to the field, and the mechanic to the house-scaffolding, and the soldier in the long march and the sailor in the ratlines; a religion for the sheaf-binding and the corn-husking, for the plow, for the adze, for the pick-axe, for the hammer. What a rebuke to the man who worships in the church and cheats in the store, serving God one day of the week and the devil six. On Sunday night he leaves his religion in the pew and shuts the pew-door, saying: "Good-bye, Religion, I will be back next Sunday." A religion that you do not take with you wherever you go is not the open-air religion of which our Lord was the founder.

Indeed, I have found a new Bible. I found it in the Holy Land and the Grecian Archipelago. A new Book of Genesis, since I saw where Abraham and Lot separated, and Joseph was buried. A new Book of Exodus, since I saw where the Israelites crossed the desert. A new Book of Revelation, since I read the Divine message to Smyrna at Smyrna, and to Ephesus at Ephesus. A new Book of John, since I saw Jacob's well and Sychar and Samaria. A new Book of Luke, since I read its twenty-third chapter on the bluff of Golgotha, at the place where there is room for but three crosses. The Bible can never be to me what it was. It is fresher, truer, lovelier, grander, mightier!

T. De Witt Talmage



CHAPTER I.

MORNING GLORIES.

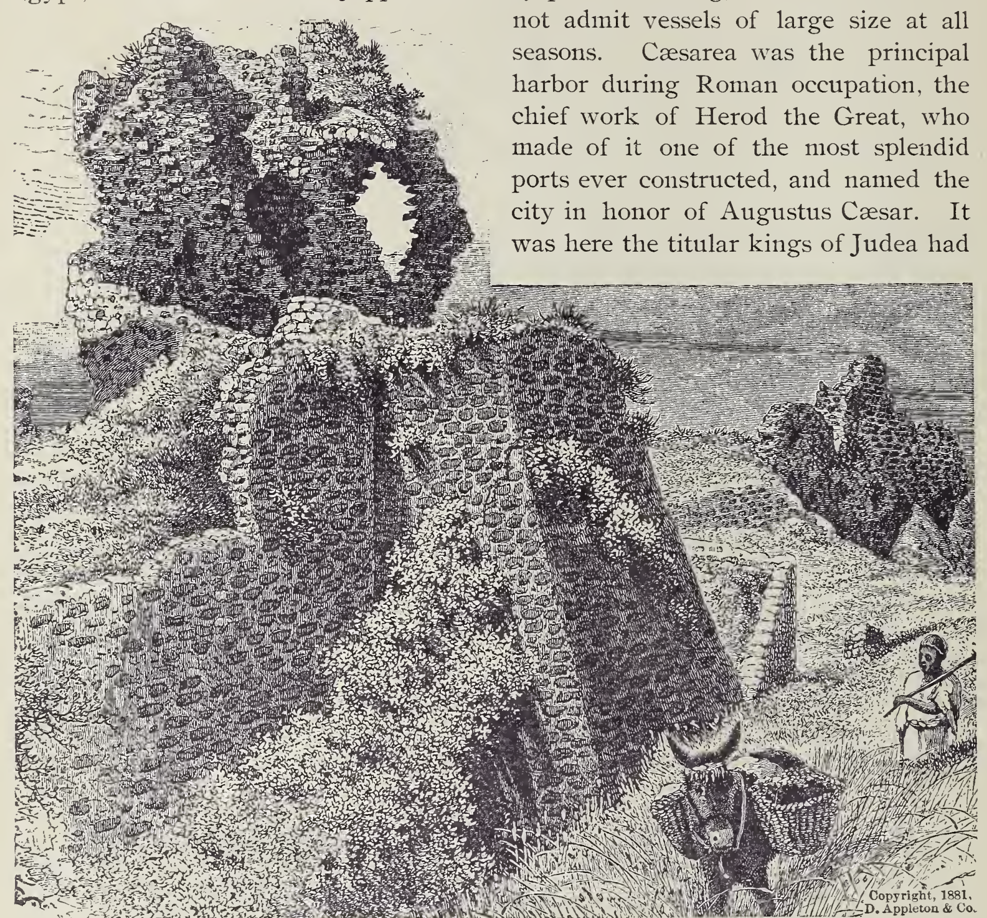
AS I begin the story of Jesus, beautiful in name, transcendent in subject, it is morning, when the air is crisp with December's frost and a merry sparkle is in the trees, starlighted with a million gleams gathered from the sun just looking over the blue hills of the East and brightening the frozen dew. My room is flooded with gilded beams that build a stairway with gentle slope across the sea and up to the door-step of heaven, where there is a rush of glories that dazzle, and a maze of beauties that bewilders, and a witchery of magnificence that confounds the imagination while thrilling and throbbing the heart with adoration and ecstasy. It must have been such a morning that awakened the Judean hills and set all nature to singing, and the music of heaven to playing, and the pulse of universal joy to throbbing, when the CHRIST was born. It must have been such a morning when, after the star choristers had hushed their acclaims, and the angels of the annunciation had left the startled shepherds and, on impatient wing, swept back to the cradle of the newly-born Lord, that the glad news was scattered throughout the valleys, and over the mounts, and down the slopes, and across the Jordan. "For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

The Holy Land.

The country in which this most momentous event occurred is remarkable, almost in consonance with the event itself. From the earliest ages it has been known as the Holy Land, because within its small territory transpired so many immensely important incidents that were directly controlled by God, as manifestations of His care for His chosen people. Palestine is a more recent designation, derived from the Hebrew word *Pelesheth* (Philistia), or country of the Philistines. Even this application was only to the southern and coast regions, and not until it came under Roman dominion was the term Palestine applied to the whole country,

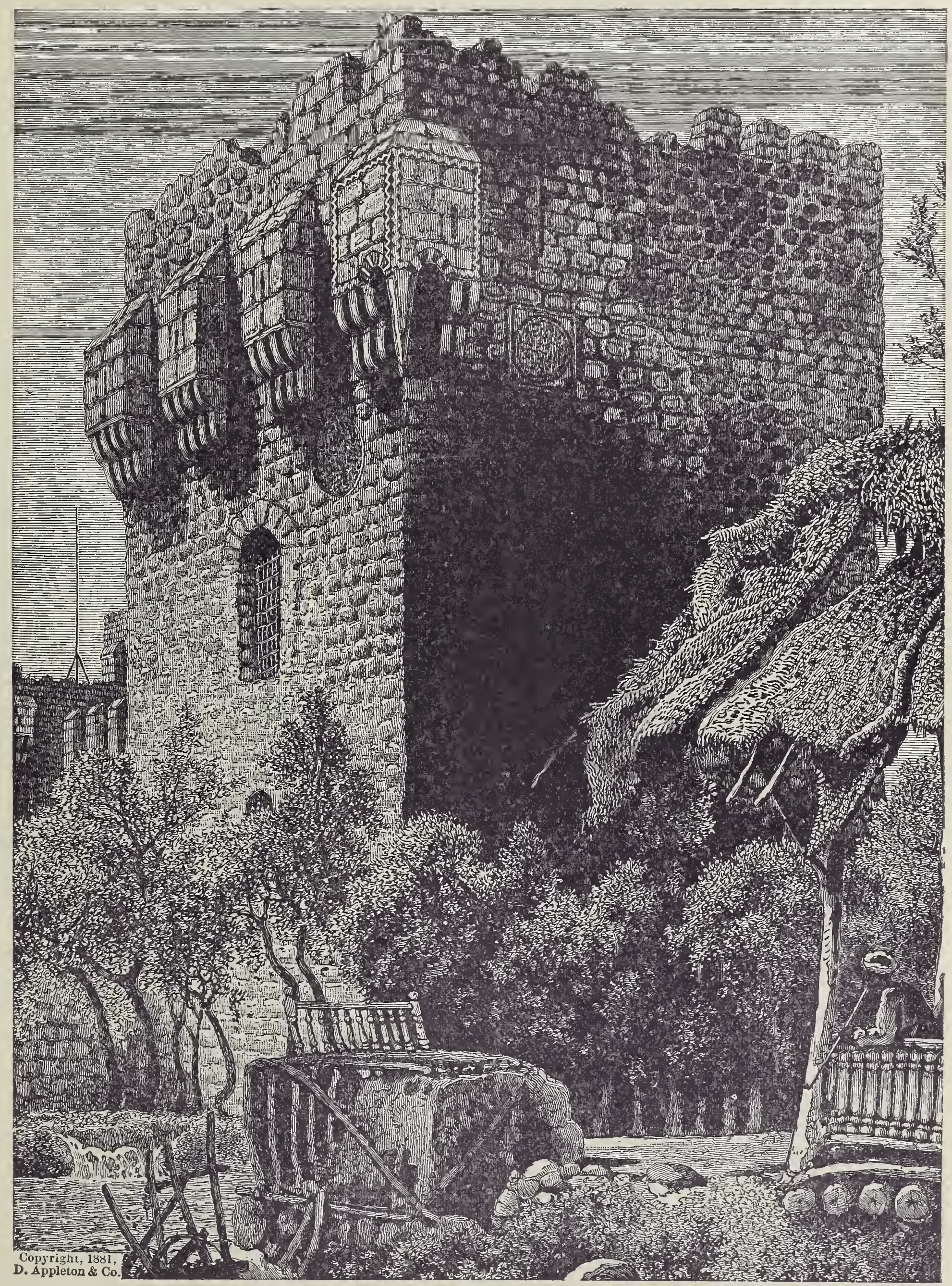
as we now find it between Tyre, or Dan, on the north, and Egypt and Arabia, or Beersheba, on the south, a distance of something less than 150 miles, while the mean breadth does not exceed thirty miles.

Palestine is pre-eminently a land of hills and valleys, the most broken region, perhaps, on earth. From a country of first importance, rivaling Egypt, like Egypt, it has declined until Joppa is the only port remaining, and even this does not admit vessels of large size at all seasons. Cæsarea was the principal harbor during Roman occupation, the chief work of Herod the Great, who made of it one of the most splendid ports ever constructed, and named the city in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It was here the titular kings of Judea had



RUINS OF ANCIENT CÆSAREA AS THEY APPEAR AT THE PRESENT DAY.

their seats, and also the Roman procurators, and where the most famous temple, theatre and circus were erected to amuse a heterogeneous populace of Jews, Romans, Greeks, Syrians, Egyptians and other nationalities of the East that flocked to the city, which was in the zenith of its commercial prosperity during



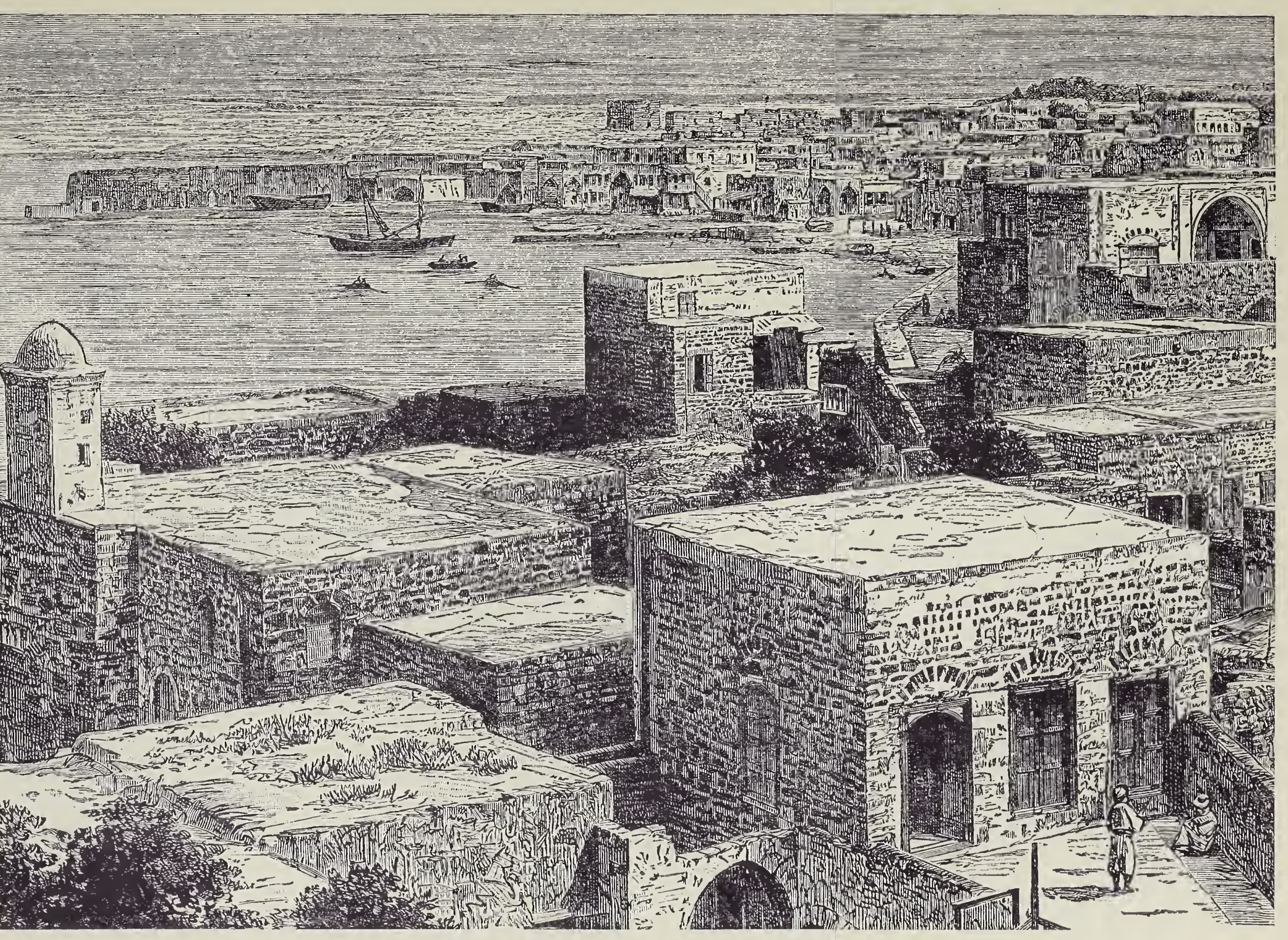
THE CITADEL OF DAMASCUS.

the ministry of Jesus. To-day the site of Cæsarea is marked by magnificent ruins, the stones of which the great wall was constructed, which are said to have been fifty feet long by eighteen feet wide, having been displaced and broken up by the invading sea, while of the great buildings that distinguished the place and its 400,000 inhabitants not even the ruins remain.

Ancient Tyre and Sidon.

But long before the founding of Cæsarea there were other cities in Palestine, in the country which was then known as Phœnicia, whose splendor and population far exceeded that of any other cities of the Levant, not even excepting Carthage. Of these, Tyre was the largest and most important, the commerce of which extended east to China and westward to all the then known world, including a traffic of no inconsiderable magnitude with the central and western parts of Africa, which are to-day practically unknown regions. Tyre was founded by the Sidonians at a period so remote that the date lies hidden behind the thick mists of centuries, but in the time of Ezekiel and Isaiah she was "the stronghold of the sea," and a glowing picture of splendor and maritime power. Against her walls the Assyrians thundered in vain, and Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar, with their million men, were hurled back at every attempt to scale her fortifications. Not until Alexander the Great assaulted, with all the power of Macedonia, Egypt and Greece, the battlements, by constructing moles about the city, did Tyre lower her banners to a conqueror. Buther fall was like that of her offspring, Carthage, so terrible that the devastating teeth of war, demolition, subjugation and spoliation brought her speedily to a ruin so complete that to-day the relics of her splendor are beneath the restless sea. Back from the shore are still to be seen the rock-hewn tombs of some who once knew Tyre when she was mistress of the sea, but of her magnificence nothing but scattered stones and crumbled edifices now remain.

Twenty miles north of Tyre was another great Phœnician city called Sidon, second only to Tyre in importance, but with a history less pregnant with great events, though its end was equally tragic. The city's power was greatest about fifteen centuries before Christ, during a period when the Egyptians held the supremacy over Phœnicia. About five centuries before Christ the city fell into the possession of the Persians, who destroyed the place because the inhabitants rebelled against Artaxerxes. The city never regained its commercial importance, but continued as a provincial capital until about the time of Christ, when it became, with nearly all Palestine, a part of the Roman empire. It was in Sidon that Christianity found an early foothold, a bishop having been ordained for the place about A. D. 300. In the eleventh century, however, the city was captured by the Mohammedans, who held it until 1108, in which year the Crusaders under



THE CITY OF TYRE AS IT NOW APPEARS.

Baldwin I. re-captured and retained it until 1187, when the Saracens again became the conquerors, only to be divested a second time by the Christians ten years later. Nearly one hundred years after, however, the place was abandoned and ordered destroyed by the Sultan Ashraf, since which time only a few fisher huts and some wave-washed ruins, that tell a tale of former splendor, now mark the site.

The history of Tyre and Sidon, with small difference, is the history of other coast cities of Palestine, and the other important towns of Phœnicia, such as Sarepta, Gebal, Beyrout, Dor, Accho, and many others that exist to-day either as small villages, or heaps of carved stone, scarred and broken by the chisel of time.

Famous Places of Sacred History.

From the Mediterranean Coast the land upheaves toward Central Palestine, where a great ridge is formed that slopes away again towards the east until reaching the plains of Assyria. Along a cleft in this ridge runs the Jordan river, so deep below its banks that it may be reached conveniently only at certain passes and fords which have continued practically the same since the time of Joshua.

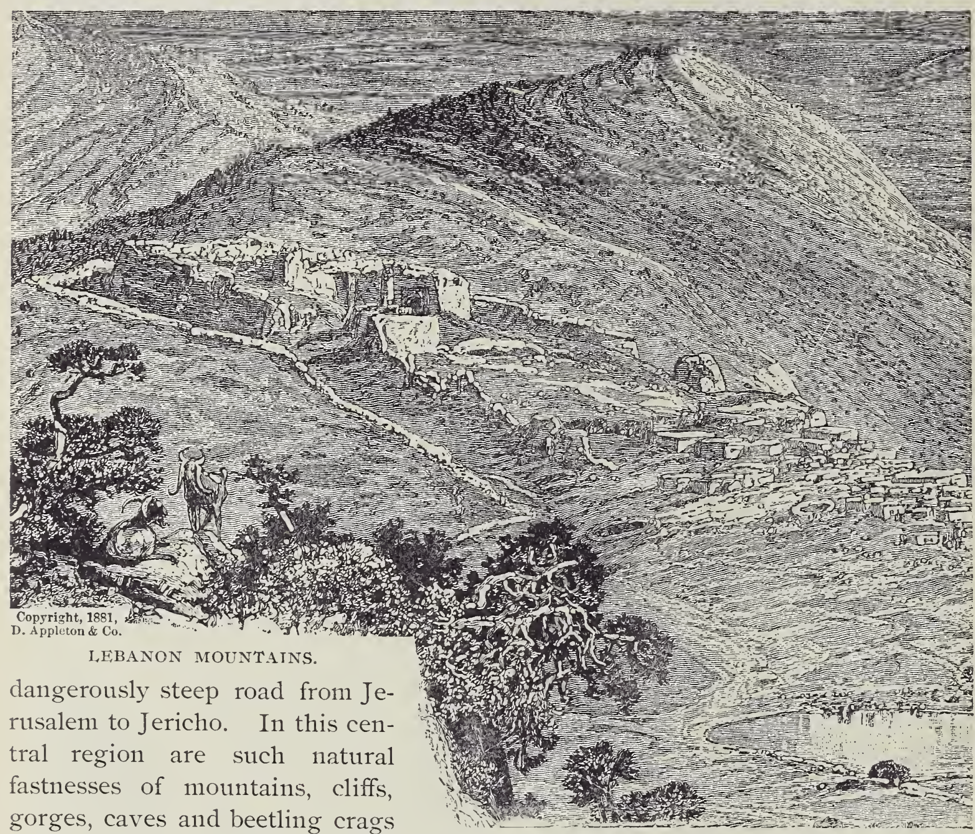
Beyond Cæsarea, on the north, the beach rapidly narrows to a termination at Mount Carmel, which is a ridge some ten miles in length and fifteen hundred feet in height, enclosing the bay of Acre on the South. Immediately north of Mount Carmel are the Lebanon Mountains, of two parallel ranges, between which is the vale of Lebanon, a fertile district, fruitful of all the products peculiar to Palestine, and of the cedars famous in history. At the southern point of the Lebanon range rises the peak of Hermon, ten thousand feet above the sea-level and overlooking nearly the entire country. South of Hermon the range is reduced to bare hills, sloping on the east to the Jordan and on the west to the historical plain of Esdraelon, sometimes called Megiddo, and Jezreel, in the Scriptures, the site of the greatest battle in Jewish history. On the northeast of this plain, at its border, is Mount Tabor, the traditional site of the transfiguration. Here was the rendezvous of Barak, from which he descended like a whirlwind and overwhelmed Sisera's army.

Jewish tradition has woven about this mountain many curious legends which have attracted the interest of mankind from time immemorial. The ruins of several prehistoric edifices are still to be seen scattered about the apex, while the relics of a fortress, presumed to have been built by the Saracens about the time of Saladin, are conspicuously strewn about over a considerable surface of the peak. A few miles south of the plain of Esdraelon rises another tract of country, broken by irregular hills, stretching east and west nearly across the breadth of Palestine, and terminating in the south with the Mount of Hebron.



THE CITY OF MODERN SIDON.

North of this lies Samaria, with its mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, between which, in a narrow valley, nestles the small village of Nablus, formerly the town of Shechem, where the two tribes established their capital after the revolt from Israel. South of Hebron is the country of Judea, with its desolate hills and mountains of stone, descending towards the Jordan Valley, in which lies the dangerously steep road from Jerusalem to Jericho. In this central region are such natural fastnesses of mountains, cliffs, gorges, caves and beetling crags that it was the fighting ground of such adventurous spirits as the Maccabees, of Jephthah's robber bands, of David, when pursued by Saul, and of the leaders of small parties when brought to bay by stronger forces.



LEBANON MOUNTAINS.

The Eye of the East.

To the east of Sidon, some forty miles, in Cœle-Syria, which adjoined Phœnicia, was the city of Damascus, said by many historians to be one of the most ancient cities in the world, and formerly the capital of all Syria. Its situation is in an astonishingly fertile plain, of such exceeding beauty that Orientals frequently

refer to it as one of the four terrestrial paradises. The city extends for two miles along the Abana river, which empties into Lake Ateibeh at Haran, a famous place in Scripture, scarcely ten miles distant towards the east.

The old city of Damascus still preserves many of its ancient attractions and presents an appearance of elegance in striking contrast with other towns of that region. Its streets are generally narrow, but usually admirably paved with basalt, an excellent substitute for asphaltum. The residences, though not inviting from an exterior view, are often magnificent within, frequently a large court being left



RUINS OF ANCIENT FORTRESS OVERLOOKING THE WATERS OF MEROM.

in the centre, from which rises a fountain that discharges a cooling spray particularly grateful in that country during the summer months.

So very ancient is the city that, like Tyre, the time of its founding is uncertain. Tradition, a main reliance with the people of Syria, says the city was built by Uz, who was the son of Aram. This belief, in connection with the fact that it is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures as contemporary with Abraham, leads to the not unreasonable supposition that the place was known to Job, who, we are told, lived in the land of Uz.

The earliest reliable history we have respecting the city is that recorded by Josephus, who says Hadad, its first king, was conquered by David, but if the city capitulated at that time the subjection was only for a brief period. We learn that in the reign of Ahaz (two hundred and fifty years after David), the city was captured by Tiglath-pileser, who slew its last king and added the place and surrounding plain, probably certain provinces, to Assyria. Following the downfall of Belshazzar, Damascus, with the rest of Assyria, passed to the dominion of the Persians and Babylonians. The city then enjoyed a period of peace until the invasion of Persia by Alexander the Great, who, at the decisive battle of Issus (B. C. 333), conquered the country and Damascus became a part of the Seleucidæ, or Syrian monarchy, and so continued until 64 B. C., when Pompey attached it to the Roman Empire.

It was near Damascus that Paul's miraculous conversion occurred, at which time the place was in possession of the Arabian King Aretas, who was father-in-law to Herod Antipas. At that period the city contained a large population of Jews, who had been flocking in after Alexander's conquests, but notwithstanding this influx of an anti-Christian people, Damascus was, next to Corinth, the first place in which a Christian Church was founded, and it has continued, with all the opposing influences of Jews and Mohammedans, strong to this day.

Under the Romans Damascus became the most important Eastern city, and chief arsenal in Asia, with such affluence of manufacture, wealth, power and position that Julian gives it the designation of "The Eye of the East."

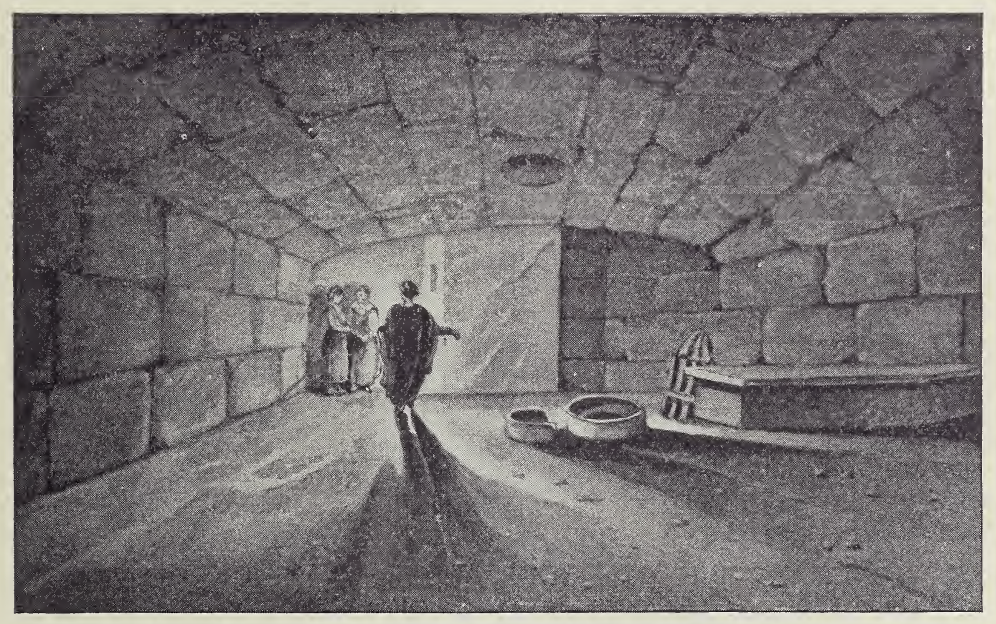
When Rome declined, the Saracens captured the city, directly after Mohammed's death, and made it the capital of all their possessions, which it continued to be for ninety years, when the capital was transferred to Bagdad. Since that time Damascus has passed through many ordeals of battle and change of rulership. The Egyptian Caliphs held the place for a time, but were dispossessed by the Turks, who in turn were besieged by Louis VII. of France and Conrad III. of Germany in 1148, but in vain. Three centuries later it surrendered, after a desperate resistance, to Tamerlane, who put the inhabitants to the sword, sparing neither age nor sex. The Turks again captured the city in 1516 and retained possession until 1832, when Egypt a second time became the possessor, but restored the place to Turkey eight years later.

Massacre of Christians.

In 1860 occurred a dreadful massacre of Christians in Damascus, by Mohammedans, in which it is said no less than three thousand adult males were slaughtered, and an equal number of females were reduced to slavery. This dreadful act of fanatical savagery was never punished, and the city still continues in possession of the murderers.

Damascus, or the ancient portion, has not materially changed in the past two thousand years, and the people have also preserved to an astonishing degree the customs and manners that distinguished them in the days of Christ.

As already mentioned, the streets are narrow and run through the extreme length of the town, but to their narrowness is added the inconvenience and unsightliness of tortuous windings, so as to make a succession of corners. One of these Paul refers to "as the street called Straight," but this title was probably given to it by a facetious Arab as the climax of an antique joke, for so far from being straight, the street is one of the crookedest of all the serpentine public ways



PAUL IN PRISON.—Photograph of Painting.

of that winding city. The houses very rarely have any yards in front, all the open spaces about them being confined to courts, as already described. Above the walls, which still stand in a condition of dangerous disintegration, rise rude habitations which were once, no doubt, as in the days of Paul, fairly commodious abodes, but all their splendor is now in their antiqueness and historical association with the hoary past.

About the suburbs of Damascus are frequent cafés, where the traveler, half faint with summer heat, may refresh himself with such delicious coffee as can be found nowhere else, save in Arabia. Summer huts are also provided by the poor as a partial refuge from the oppressive warmth which prevails during the hot and

dry season of nearly six months. These are occasionally built on a frame-work of poles, with planks roughly laid for flooring. The material of which they are constructed is usually the branches of trees so interlaced and covered with leaves as to give a secure and yet airy habitation, though in appearance they very much resemble the leaf huts of the Backone tree-dwellers.

Jerusalem.

The founding of Jerusalem, like that of Tyre, Damascus and many other places of Palestine, was accomplished at such a remote period that no records remain to give us any information as to the time or by whom. Its history is the story of the Hebrew people and of the Saviour of the world; its shrines, the repositories of all that is sacred to Christianity. No other city has passed so often through the crucible of devastation, spoliation and massacre. Since the time of Abraham it has been besieged twenty-four times and destroyed four times. Seven times has the city been captured since the birth of Christ, and twice its walls, and every building of importance, demolished. From a great commercial mart, with a population of two hundred thousand souls, which distinguished it above the cities of the East during the ministry of Jesus, it has sunk to a condition of apathy and squalor, and is now like fruit that hangs too long on the tree, blighted, shriveled, decayed, and contains scarcely twenty thousand inhabitants, of a heterogeneous admixture.

Anciently Jerusalem was the seat of David's empire, and of many kings before him, but now the only claim to royalty which the place retains is found in its being the seat of a Turkish Pasha, and as being one of the three holy cities of its last conquerors, the Mohammedans, who have so long defiled its sanctuaries.

The city as it now stands occupies a site on a high plateau of some two miles square, which is connected with the mountain range that provides a water-shed for all Palestine. Every spot within several miles of the city is holy ground, by reason of some momentous event that has transpired thereon, worthy of description in sacred history. To the west is Gihon, at the feet of which trail their lengths along the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, which make a sweep around the walls of Jerusalem and blend near the pool of Siloam, which once "flowed fast by the oracle of God."

On the east, rising from the valley of Jehoshaphat into three bold peaks, is the Mount of Olives, while overhanging the valley of Hinnom on the south is the Hill of Evil Counsel, on the rock-ribbed side of which is the Potters' Field, once called "The Field of Blood." Scarcely half a mile from Jerusalem is the upper pool of Gihon, a large reservoir of water, which flows into the pool of Hezekiah within the walls and furnishes the city water supply for bathing purposes.

The country everywhere about Jerusalem is not only much broken, but is very rocky, and hence little suited for either agricultural or pastoral purposes. That it was at one time a fairly fertile district is well proved by the history of the peoples who anciently occupied it, but the many devastating wars through which the region has passed have rendered it barren almost beyond reclamation. At every siege the city sustained, such vegetation as had grown up about the



SUMMER HUTS IN THE SUBURBS OF DAMASCUS.

place was destroyed either by the besiegers or the besieged, and this denudation permitted the rains to wash down the hillsides, carrying with every flood great quantities of soil, until the substratum of stone was exposed and made cultivation of the slopes, except for raising of grapes and olives, impossible. On the other hand, the valleys became extremely rich by reason of having received the soil

and vegetation washed down into them from the hills, and in these there is an immense yield of grain and grasses.

If we pass through and around Jerusalem, we cannot fail to notice relics of the ancient city that bring fresh to our minds much that is of profound interest and with which the life of Jesus is inseparably connected, as is also many of the most exciting events in Jewish history. Ancient Jerusalem was well protected by strong walls, a defence which all cities of the East possessed two thousand years ago. The first wall was probably built during David's reign, as it encircled Zion and a considerable part of Moriah, upon which the Temple was afterwards erected. One end began at what was known as the Tower of Hippicus and crossed to the Tower of Xystus, close to the Temple site, dividing the city, and thus, while affording a strong defence for the upper portion of the place, left the lower part in an almost defenceless condition. It was for this reason that besiegers of the city frequently gained possession of the lower portion, only to be hurled back with dreadful slaughter when they assaulted the hill. From this wall another branched off towards the west from the Tower of Hippicus and extended to the Essenes Gate, from whence it made a sweep toward the southeast, enclosing Zion, and terminated again at the Temple. Yet another wall had its beginning at what was called the Gate of Gennath, which pierced the first wall very near the Hippicus tower. It extended towards the main gate on the north side of the city and then turned towards the southeast until it flanked the Temple and joined the other wall at the Fort of Antonio. There was still a fourth wall, which extended from the Tower of Hippicus to that of Psephinus, from whence it diverged eastward, thence southward until it united with the first and principal wall east of the Temple. None of these walls are now standing, though the remains of them are still to be seen and their foundations are frequently struck in modern excavations.

Though the first defences of the city have become nearly obliterated by time, and a long period of peace which did not call for their restoration, the city is still protected by a very large wall built in the years 1536–9 by the Turkish Sultan, known in history as Solyman the Magnificent. This wall, the most substantial as well as imposing that ever enclosed the city, is fifteen feet thick at the base and varies in height from twenty-five to seventy feet, with a circuit of a little less than three miles.

Jerusalem of to-day, though much smaller than in the time of Christ, is so ancient in appearance and presents so few changes in general aspect from that of Jerusalem of two thousand years ago, that the first impression made upon the Bible student who enters the city is, that he is amid surroundings made familiar to him through a reading of the Scriptures. Herod's Palace, Pilate's splendid residence, the magnificent Temple, the great synagogues, are not there, having

been reduced by the dissolving effects of time, or destroyed by the ruthless hand of spoliation, but in their stead are other buildings of similar architectural appearance, built upon sites memorable for all ages, so that though the body may be dissipated the spirit of the holy period still remains. The city is now almost a square, and, like the Jerusalem of old, the walls are pierced by five gates called



SCENERY IN THE MOUNTAINS NEAR JERUSALEM.

respectively the "Hebrew Gate," which is the principal entrance; "Gate of the Columns," "Gate of our Lady Mary," "David's Gate," and "Gate of the Moors." These modern gates not only bear names which connect them with holy characters, but they replace those with which we have old acquaintance because so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, such as were called the "horse," "sheep" and "fish gates," which no doubt opened near the market

places, and the "fountain" and "water" gates, and the gates of "Ephraim" and of "Joshua."

The Rivers of Palestine.

Of the water-courses of Palestine the Jordan is most important, as it is really the only river in the country, the other so-called rivers being evanescent streams that appear sometimes swollen into great torrents during the rainy season, and again presenting beds of luxuriant valley grasses throughout the summer months. The Jordan has its principal source at the base of Mount Hermon, where several streams boil out in incessant flow, tumbling down their noisy beds until they unite to form a lake formerly known as Huhel, but now designated as Merom. The waters gathered together in this lake run out in a murky and sluggish stream until they reach a rocky bed so narrow that the current is greatly accelerated, and then goes gamboling into lake Gennesaret some dozen miles below Huhel. Gennesaret is also called the Sea of Galilee, and of Tiberias, being more often referred to in the Bible than any other body of water in Palestine, save the river Jordan. This lake is about 650 feet below sea level, and though it receives heavy deposits of sediment, carried into it by numerous brooks started into renewed life each fall and spring, its waters are always clear and beautiful, abounding with many species of fish. As agriculture is nowhere in Palestine extensively followed, the people living adjacent to the lake are largely engaged in taking fish therefrom, just as they were in the time of Christ.

Leaving Gennesaret, the Jordan passes through a broad valley in an extremely tortuous course, descending no less than twenty-seven rapids on its way to the Dead Sea, 1300 feet below the sea level, its extreme length being about 300 miles, but on a direct line from source to mouth not more than 125 miles.

The Dead Sea.

The considerable body of water known as the "Dead Sea" is very remarkable not only for the history with which it is connected, but for the wondrous character of its waters also. It was formerly called the Sea of Sodom, and the Salt Sea of Scriptures, but the designation of Dead Sea has been common since the present era. The sea lies between the mountains of Moab and Hebron, and is eighteen miles east of Jerusalem. Its length is a fraction more than forty miles, and its greatest breadth about ten miles, constituting at one time the valley of Siddim, which Lot selected in which to graze his vast herds of sheep and cattle when he and Abraham separated. In this valley were situated the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, that were destroyed by fire from heaven and from which Lot and his family alone escaped.

While the present basin of the Dead Sea may once have been a fertile valley capable of supporting two large cities and numerous flocks, the region is described



PORTION OF THE ANCIENT SOUTH WALL OF JERUSALEM, AND VIEW OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

in Genesis (xiv. 10) as being "full of slime pits," from which we may infer that the outcroppings of petroleum reservoirs were frequent, and natural gas vents common.

The destruction is believed to have occurred about 2000 years before Christ, and to have been accompanied by an eruptive force so great as to sink the vicinity to a great depth, and thus make it a receptacle for the waters of the Jordan. The salt of the lake may have been produced by the sudden exposure of soluble matter to the inrushing waters of

the river, in accordance with the now well-established theory of Figuier and Maury as to the manner in which salt is produced in the alembic of nature. Near the sea, on the southwest side, is Sodom Mountain, which contains a salt stratum, while a short distance from the base is a column or figure, on an oval pedestal, which is of saline property except the apex, which is of limestone. This pillar is supposed to be the transformed wife of Lot, a supposition which Josephus also expresses.

Along the shores of the sea bitumen is found in considerable quantities, especially since an earthquake which visited that region some years ago. Sulphur springs are also frequent, and sulphur is found in layers scattered about the adjoining plain. The water is so acrid that, applied to the eyes or mouth, it produces great irritation, so that bathers in the sea must exercise caution to prevent painful consequences. Soundings by Lieutenant Lynch show a depth of over 1300 feet in the northern portion, equal to the depression of its surface below the Mediterranean level, so that it is the lowest sea in the world. It has no outlet, yet the variations of its rise by spring freshets and its fall during the excessively hot and dry season never exceed fifteen feet. In the summer-time the evaporation is so rapid that the surrounding country is almost hidden by dense mists, which render the vicinity most insalubrious and the air so oppressive as to be almost irrespirable. No living thing exists in the Dead Sea, while along the shores are scattered the trunks of decayed trees and bushes barely alive and always leafless. The birds that are peculiar to the region have dusky plumage, in harmony with the waters, the trees and stones, and the animate no less than the inanimate objects thereabout bear the impress of desolation, the look of doom and the visage of a curse.

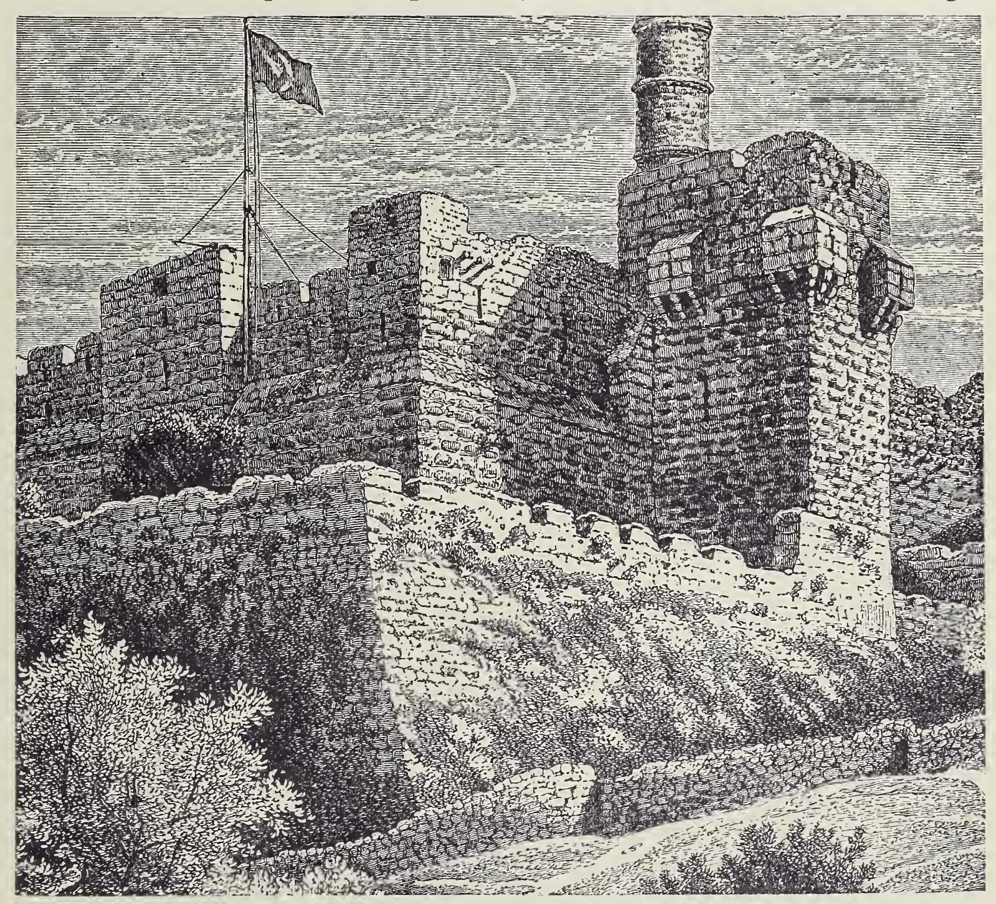
Brooks of Palestine.

The Kishon, where Baal's prophets were slaughtered by order of Elijah, rises in Mount Tabor and flows into the bay of Acre near Mount Carmel. During the fall and spring it is a considerable stream, but in summer there is no water in its bed save for the last seven miles.

The Arnon and Jabbok are now known as *wadys*, an Arabic term for a bed that contains water in the wet season and is dry in the summer. They both discharge their waters into the Jordan. The Kidron flows through the valley of Jehoshaphat, east of Jerusalem, and into the Dead Sea. Though a stream often mentioned, both in the Old and New Testament, it is an inconstant brook, more often dry than running. The other streams of Palestine are no more than wadys, important only because of the memorable events that occurred on their banks or in their dry beds.

While Palestine of to-day is generally uninviting as a land sown with dragons' teeth, choking out, like tares, the fruitfulness of the soil, until it presents

the hard appearance of a country mildewed, decayed, desolated, yet many evidences remain to attest its former magnificence, if not fertility. Out on the barren hills where rocks pile up in confusion, covered with wild vines, a haunt for the scorpion, lizard and fox, there will be found ruins of stately edifices, monuments graved with the records of mighty events, columns of marble that once gleamed in the corridors of splendid temples, images and statues which, centuries ago,



THE CITADEL OF JERUSALEM.

stood in grand halls, great courts and sparkling throne rooms. "For miles and miles," says Dean Stanley, "there is no appearance of present life or habitation except the occasional goat-herd on the hillside, or gathering of women at the wells, yet there is hardly a hill top of the many within sight which is not covered with the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages. The ruins which we

now see are of the most distant ages: Saracenic, Crusading, Roman, Grecian, Jewish, extending perhaps even to the old Canaanitish remains before the arrival of Joshua.''

While the mountainous regions are exceedingly barren, the valleys of Palestine are of great fertility, though even these productive portions are not cultivated to their capacity to bear. This does not apply, however, to the valley south of and near Bethlehem, which is irrigated and tilled with such care that it may be considered as one of the fairest vales of the earth. In ancient times the mountains were beautifully terraced and made to produce an abundance of grapes and other fruits, but incessant, devastating wars broke the spirit and ambition of the people so that they practically ceased their former labors and suffered their fields to become rank, in which condition of neglect they still remain. Pastoral pursuits are now as common as in the days of Abraham, though the people confine their attention to sheep and goats, cattle being both scarce and ill-favored. Bees are so numerous throughout the country that everywhere vast storehouses of honey are found in hollow trees and among the rocks, as it was in the time of John. Locusts also frequently appear in immense swarms, devouring all vegetation, and upon these the people in some localities largely subsist, as they do in Arabia.

The People of Palestine.

The present inhabitants of Palestine differ little from those who occupied the country in the time of Christ. They include Syrians, Arabs, Jews, Greeks and a sprinkling of all other nationalities. The Mohammedans are in the ascendant, but permit freedom of religious worship and respect the sacred shrines to which so many Christians make frequent pilgrimage. When Palestine was known as Canaan, and the country of Canaan and Gilead were divided by the Jordan, the population was perhaps ten times greater than it is to-day, the decadence having begun with the Israelitish invasion and continued up to the time of the re-building of the Temple by Nehemiah. The influx of returning Jews from their seventy years' bondage to the Assyrians rapidly increased the population, which was further augmented by a large immigration of Samaritans, but never again did Palestine regain the power or number of inhabitants that distinguished the country when known as Canaan and Gilead.

In the time of Joshua the country was divided among many tribes that have collectively been distinguished as Canaánites, it sometimes happening that the possessions of a tribe were confined to a single city, which was held by something like feudal tenure. This precarious occupancy caused the tribes to throw immense walls about their cities, strengthened and fortified by citadels and barbacans, and to keep a trained soldiery that was generally hotly engaged in an effort to capture other cities or in defending their own. The several tribes of Canaanites



ENTRANCE TO THE CITADEL, ON THE TRADITIONAL SITE WHERE DAVID SAT AWAITING NEWS FROM THE BATTLE IN EPHRAIM WOODS, WHERE ABSALOM WAS KILLED.



THE RIVER HASBANY, THE NORTHERN TRIBUTARY OF THE JORDAN.

were distributed about as follows: The three K's, that is the Kadmanites, the Kenizzites and Kenites, and a small portion of the Amorites, were occupants of Gilead, or that portion of Palestine lying east of the Jordan; while in Canaan, or west of the

Jordan, were the Jebusites, Hittites, Perizzites and a majority of Amorites, who were confined principally to the hilly south country. In the Lebanon country dwelt the Hivites, not a numerous people, and therefore so peaceable that they are not frequently mentioned. The Girgashites were confined to a small strip of country along the east shore of Gennesaret, and were chiefly engaged in swine-raising, an industry which was not so extensively followed by any other tribe. They were the most ignorant and debased of all the people and had no



BEDOUINS OF PALESTINE.

intercourse with other tribes, while their own possessions were insufficient to incite the cupidity of their neighbors.

In the extreme north, as already mentioned, dwelt the Phœnicians, the most civilized and richest of all the dwellers in the east, while in the extreme southwest were the Philistines, noted for their valor in war and their power as a tribe that had all the characteristics of a nation except for their migratory and predatory habits. This fierce and valorous people continued to menace Israel until their ascendancy was finally broken by David.



GROUP OF ORIENTAL MAIDENS.—From *The Christian Herald.*

CHAPTER II.

BLOODY EVENTS IN THE REIGN OF HEROD.

AT THE beginning of the Christian Era the whole of Palestine was under Roman dominion, having been divided into provinces and districts and placed under the direct rulership of ethnarchs and tetrarchs as representatives of Rome. The country west of the Jordan embraced the provinces of Galilee, Samaria and Judea, over which the Ethnarch Archelaus presided, while the east country was divided into eight districts, viz : Perea proper, Gilead, Decapolis, Gaulonitis, Batanea, Auranitis, Trachonitis and Abilene, which were governed by two tetrarchs, Philip and Herod Antipas.

It was immediately preceding this division of Palestine and in consequence of the disputes and bloody events which had distinguished the rulership of Herod, son of Antipater, who was of the last dynasty in Judea, and who had established himself as an independent king under the auspices and favors of the Roman triumvirs, that several of the most momentous occurrences in the history of Israel transpired.

Hyrcanus, who, as the son of Alexander Jannæus, the Sadducee, had (B. C. 71) been established as high priest by his mother, was soon after reconfirmed by Pompey, after defeating the contestant, Aristobulus, and capturing Jerusalem, with tremendous slaughter of the people. In the name of Hyrcanus, Antipater became Governor, who, in turn, was established by Cæsar after the fall of Pompey, as Procurator of Judea. This change of rulership was speedily followed by an invasion of the country by Antigonus, who defeated the great Roman general Crassus (B. C. 53) and, making himself master of Judea, carried Hyrcanus into captivity. His success was of short duration, however, for Herod, son of Antipater, who had been compelled to seek safety in flight to Rome, succeeded in winning the favor of the triumvirs, and with a royal commission returned to Judea to assume the office of Procurator. He quickly took the title of Herod the Great, and began his rule by ordering a reconstruction of the Temple in a style of almost inconceivable magnificence, and the building of cities and fortresses which should make his reign more glorious than was that of Solomon, whom he had an ambition to excel. But while this great expenditure of the revenue and treasure of the country was made with the double purpose of increasing his fame and winning

the admiration of his subjects, he was so injudicious as to institute ceremonies which, while grateful to his vanity, were most repugnant to the Jews, and which reacted against him with great force. Among his foreign allies or supporters were Marc Antony and his voluptuous mistress, Cleopatra, out of consideration to whose desires Herod established customs that had from time immemorial received the condemnation of all Jewish law-givers. Among these forbidden carnivals which Herod revived were gladiatorial contests, and Olympian games, and Dionysian festivals, and the setting up of statues, while above the Temple gate he caused to be fixed the Roman Eagle, which to the Jews was a



ROMAN SOLDIERS BESIEGING A WALLED CITY.

perpetual reminder of their thraldom to the new conquerors, and their subjection as a nation that had been oppressed by many yokes, galling and grievous.

Horrible Atrocities of Herod.

With the institution of ceremonials repugnant to the vast majority of his subjects, Herod conceived and executed revenges that incited against him the just hatred of the Jews, who now saw in their ruler the bloody iron hand of a malevolent ruffian who was bent on effacing the last vestiges of Jewish succession and the complete destruction of their influence as a nation. "The Maccabean blood was the red flag that set aflame with passion the Herodian bull, and with a merciless sword he set about the slaughter."

Herod was himself connected with the house of Maccabees by marriage, being the husband of Mariamne, who was granddaughter of Hyrcanus, and daughter of Alexandra and Jannæus, and sister of Aristobulus. But this fact did not in any wise abate his determination to destroy the seed royal ; by his desire, if not direct orders, Antigonus was executed at Damascus, followed soon after by the murder of his own powerful rival, Hyrcanus, who was enticed from Babylon to Jerusalem with the promise from Herod to re-establish him in the position of high priest. The next to fall by his attainted hand was the youthful high priest Aristobulus, his queen's brother, who was drowned while bathing with the king, by the latter's attendants. But these murders, instead of glutting Herod's vengeance, only stimulated his atrocious spirit to baser deeds. His victims now rapidly multiplied in the following order : Joseph, his uncle ; then his own beloved queen, whom he suspected of conniving against the perpetuity of his crown, next his mother-in-law Alexandra, and a few years after, as will presently be described, his two sons, who were idols of the people, possessing as they did all the graces and good qualities of their mother, and none of the vices of their brutal father ; all these fell victims to his madness. Besides these executions of Herod's relations, hundreds of others were as cruelly slaughtered by the royal edict for no other crime than the king's suspicion that they were in sympathy with the victims and thus secretly opposed to his rule.



THE ROMAN EAGLE, AND STATUE OF TITUS.

Calamities that Befell the Nation.

The many murders of innocent people and the flagrant abuses of his power at length brought Herod into a sorry plight. The blood of his house cried out against him and the mutterings of the people grew so loud and general that to have hushed them would have depopulated his kingdom. But as if to increase his miseries, four years after the death of Mariamne, and in the thirteenth of his reign, a dreadful famine prevailed throughout the land, which the people construed

as a judgment sent by God for the king's crimes and his defilement of the sanctuary, which had been prostituted to all manner of heathen worship. Something must be done to avert a threatened insurrection and placate his incensed subjects and, if possible, to win their favor. With admirable diplomacy, therefore, Herod brought out from his sumptuously furnished palace all the silver service and rich cloths and splendid furnishings, to which he added his plethoric treasury, and sent the whole to Egypt with which to buy grain for his famishing people and their starving herds. Vast quantities of corn were thus brought into Palestine, which he distributed as a free gift to all the needy, as well as a bounteous provision of clothing to all those who had lost their flocks of goats and sheep. Besides this munificent bounty, he remitted a third of the taxes and removed all burdens, within his power to do, without bankrupting the nation, from the people; but while doing these generous things he forfeited a large portion of the favor which they must have brought him by a most impolitic act, in issuing a decree ordering that all persons convicted of theft should be sold as slaves to other countries. This was specially obnoxious to the Jews, who foresaw, as they believed, a scheme for the removal of persons who might be repugnant to the king, and a law easily abused by using it to gratify personal spites.

A Royal Domestic Imbroglio.

The complaints which the law for the punishment of theft incited speedily abated, however, and popular feeling turned towards Herod for the first time, as a reward for his interposition with Agrippa on behalf of the Jews to grant to them the privileges of free worship and protection, as promised by Cæsar, and also because of a further remission of a quarter of the annual tax.

In the meantime, Herod's two sons by his first wife, Mariamne (he having meanwhile married a Jewess of the same name), Alexander and Aristobulus, the former now eighteen years of age, and the latter one year younger, had been sent to Rome and placed under careful tutelage for a bringing up that would prepare them for the assumption of imperial duties. Their schooling in home had not made them forget their father's cruelty, nor diminished their love for the memory of their mother, and with the harboring of a desire for revenge they sought to have the accusers of their mother brought to trial. In addition to this effort to revive animosities, the two sons also showed an unmistakable aversion to others of the king's household, which led to a conspiracy being formed against them, in which Herod was soon made a party. The sons were recalled and each provided with a wife, Alexander, who was crown prince, being wedded to a daughter of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, whose mother was the illegitimate offspring of a votary in the temple of Venus in Corinth. Aristobulus was united to Herod's niece, named Berenice, daughter of the king's sister Salome. These two brides

began, almost immediately upon entering Herod's palace, to foment strife by carrying the idle gossip of attendants to the Court, who in turn retailed all such reports, especially when they reflected upon the ambition of the princes, to Herod, and thus were the plans of the conspirators against Alexander and Aristobulus rapidly promoted. To add to this sorry condition of the royal household, Berenice and Glasphyra, wife of Alexander, became envious of one another and fell into a bitter quarrel, which soon involved their husbands. Another ingredient of evil that increased the bubble in the already seething kettle of domestic scandal, was caused by the marriage of Herod's youngest brother, Pheroras, with a Pharisee slave girl, who threw herself



ARMOR OF ROMAN OFFICERS IN THE TIME OF HEROD.

into the broil because Glasphyra had ridiculed Pheroras for his low alliance. All were now against the two princes save their wives, and the conspirators hastened a consummation of their foul plans by inducing Herod to recall his son Antipater, who had been banished some years before, and who was known to be a bitter enemy of the princes. A result of this scheme was the naming of Antipater as heir to the throne and, on account of his accusations, the arrest of Alexander and Aristobulus, who were conveyed to Rome for trial before Cæsar on the charge of conspiracy against the life of their father. Their personal popularity at Rome, as well as their address, however, procured for them an acquittal, and they returned to Jerusalem in the company of Herod with an outward appearance of reconciliation.

Execution of the Two Princes.

A very short period of peace intervened before a fresh disturbance in Herod's household occurred, precipitated a second time by a renewal of the enmity between the wives of Alexander, Aristobulus and of Pheroras, while Antipater encouraged the hatred, knowing that out of the difficulty some personal advantage must come to his unscrupulous ambition. At length, when the occasion seemed auspicious for their base purposes, Antipater and Pheroras caused the slaves of the two princes to be seized and put to the torture, with the intent of thus extorting from them an accusation of their master's guilt of conspiracy. In this infamous purpose they succeeded, and then confronting Alexander with the confessions so basely and mercilessly secured, they boldly added their own accusations. Annoyed, threatened, pursued, traduced and abused as he had been, with his father's hand against him and nowhere to turn for protection, in a moment of madness Alexander admitted his guilt, making no other defence thereto than the claim that he was no more a conspirator against his father's life than were all others of his relatives, excepting alone Antipater, whom he regarded, despite the baseness manifested, as his best friend, and therefore he desired that no ill might befall him. The admission thus made and his sweeping charge against his relatives as co-conspirators so incensed them, that with one voice they demanded his immediate execution, which, but for the king of Cappadocia would, no doubt, have been obeyed.

A dreadful condition of affairs now followed. If Herod's concern were great before, his state of mind was now so horrible as to excite compassion. He very soon discovered the deceits in his household, and the designs so persistently and systematically pursued by Pheroras and Salome, who were evidently seeking, not only the death of the princes, but his own as well. Thus he became suspicious of all his Court which increased the evils by multiplying the accusers, who made charges against each other in order to divert suspicion from themselves. At length this very condition developed a deeper intrigue in the mind of one of

Herod's Greek Court officers, who sought to profit by interposing his offices for a final settlement of the disputes. Seeing that Antipater and Archelaus had some interests in common, which they would willingly pay him largely to advance, and having diagnosed the canker in the king's mind as a consuming suspicion against his two sons, he deliberately set about planning for their execution. It was not long before he was able to lay before Herod such forged letters as convinced the king of the charges so speciously advanced, and forthwith the two princes were placed in chains by the royal order and their slaves again put to the rack to affix their guilt. Salome importuned Herod incessantly to destroy them, which he had a strong desire to do, but was restrained for a time by the fear that such an act, perpetrated so soon after their acquittal by a Roman tribunal, would give offence to Augustus, who certainly had some regard for the unfortunate princes, over whom he had exercised a friendly care during the time they had attended school in Rome.

The incessant importunings of Salome, however, influenced the distracted Herod at length to address a message to Augustus requesting permission to order the execution of the princes. This request, though granted, so incensed Augustus that he wrote a very caustic letter to Herod, condemning him for his cruelty and unnatural hatred, and for his pusillanimous



ROMAN INFANTRY SOLDIERS.

weakness in permitting such a broil and calamitous termination in his own household. While giving Herod a permit to destroy his two sons, Augustus took away from him the crown of Arabia.

In pursuance of the authority thus granted Herod appeared before the court, held at Bertyus, whither the two sons were brought in chains, and at a mock trial, on the evidence of the father, the unfortunate princes were condemned to death, and were accordingly strangled at Samaria.

Herod had confidently expected that the death of his two sons would be followed by a truce between the warring factions of his household, but so great was his disappointment that the embitterment was increased and the king became at once an object not only for suppressed public execration, but also for the murderous shafts of one of his surviving sons, Antipater, and his adroit and malignant brother, Pheroras. Antipater had really been the instigator of nearly all the trouble which brought his brothers Alexander and Aristobulus to a violent death, and fearing that his villainy would be exposed to his father he joined in a conspiracy with Pheroras to murder Herod. The latter entered willingly into the plot, being incited thereto by a movement begun by his wife's relations and the Pharisees, who were anxious to compass the death of Herod and to place Pheroras on the throne. To give greater encouragement to their murderous scheme they industriously circulated prophecies that God had decreed a transference of the throne from Herod and his family to Pheroras. The plot was also furthered by the procurement of the aid of one of Herod's eunuchs, named Bagoas, who, it was declared, should soon become father of a son who would be the long-promised Messiah.

This conspiracy, though adroitly conceived, and participated in by many persons about the palace—and its execution would no doubt have met with general approval—was nevertheless exposed, and several rabbis and commoner people near the king were put to death. Pheroras was suspected by Herod, but not openly accused of participation, hence in the belief that Pheroras' wife was one of the prince's instigators, Herod demanded that she be divorced and sent out of the kingdom. Rather than do this, however, Pheroras accepted banishment in her company, and accordingly proceeded to Perea, where he very soon after suddenly died from swallowing a poison potion which had been sent by Antipater to kill Herod, who now, in the eccentricity of his disposition and distraction of mind conceived that Pheroras had been guiltless of any participation in the plot against his life. To make amends as far as possible for what he thought had been his unjust suspicion, he caused the body of Pheroras to be brought back to Jerusalem and appointed a day of national mourning for his death.

Antipater, who had remained at Rome, and was yet ignorant of the exposure of his villainy, was now sent for by Herod, the request for his presence being

made in a letter of unctuous friendliness which completely disarmed him of any suspicion. Antipater came at once to Jerusalem in response to the summons, and as he entered the palace Herod gave orders for his arrest and trial before the Syrian proconsul. The evidence of his guilt was conclusive, and withal so horrifying that Herod, after communicating the result to Rome, was seized with an illness from which it was declared by those who attended him he could not recover. This report quickly spread and was followed immediately by an outburst of long-



RUINS OF HEROD'S PALACE IN SAMARIA, AS THEY NOW APPEAR.

repressed hatred on the part of the Jews, led as they were by the rabbis. They regarded the culmination as a direct manifestation of God's anger at Herod for his many sacrilegious acts, in profaning the Temple, and his violations of the Jewish laws, as well as the many acts of cruelty which had distinguished his reign. The incipient revolution was characterized by a freedom of complaint made by the rabbis against the iniquities of Herod, and the criticisms thus publicly made soon emboldened the people to add the most serious accusations, and from these

revolution quickly succeeded. From a smouldering coal a great fire had been developed and the kingdom was in a tumult. The rabbis, or Pharisees, went crying through the streets of Jerusalem, and not only in synagogues but on the corners, everywhere, inflamed the passions of the populace by bitter harangues until a mob organized to destroy the hated symbols of Rome, which the Jews regarded as badges of their servitude to the Romish invaders. A body of students, encouraged by the rabbis, rushed to the Temple, and tore down the Roman Eagle, which they broke to pieces in the street, while others rose in various parts of the city, and committed similar acts until they were scattered by a charge of a company of soldiers. Forty of the rioters were arrested and taken for judgment before Herod. When he threatened them with death they only laughed him to scorn, and counted that their reward should be so great hereafter that they had no fears of any punishments he could inflict. Herod was so bitterly incensed by this bravado, besides being racked with both mental and physical suffering, that he ordered a prompt trial of the offenders at Jericho, readily anticipating what the result must be. They were of course convicted of treason and vandalism, and by Herod were brought to a terrible punishment. The rabbis and several leaders of the movement were burned at the stake and the rest were beheaded.

But these inflictions, cruel, terrible as they were, did not break the spirit of his enemies, nor did they serve to assuage his dreadful sufferings. He could bring a horrible punishment upon his enemies, but as an enemy to God he must endure sufferings even greater. A loathsome disease was slowly but surely devouring his vitals; it had him on the rack of torture, and human hands could give him no relief now, no more than a royal pronunciamento could avert his torment. Servants carried his putrefying body to the sulphur springs of Callirhoe, but the waters could do him no good, for the angel of death had troubled the waters of his life and soul.

He saw with distempered vision a procession of his victims, his wife, sons, and scores of subjects, with locks bedraggled of blood, and eyes looking scorn, and fingers pointing triumphant. His last day was fast approaching, when suddenly he thought of his arch enemy, his unnatural son, Antipater, who had not yet paid the penalty of his horrible iniquities. In a trice the failing king wrote out an order for his immediate execution, and five days after Antipater had joined the other victims. Herod surrendered up his soul in the seventy-second year of his miserable life, probably two years after the birth of Christ.

CHAPTER III.

JEWISH BELIEFS RESPECTING THE MESSIAH.

THE distracted condition of affairs in Judea, as described in the preceding chapter, led to a critical examination of the old prophecies as to the time when the predicted Messiah should appear. Many of the most learned believed that Christ would come when Israel was in the deepest distress, when her oppression was greatest, and when calamity, either through natural causes or by the grinding heels of invaders, should make His aid most needful. This direful time seemed now to have arrived, and hence there was a quickening of interest in the prophecies, and in the days of her distraction Israel therefore became buoyant with a refreshing hope of the Messiah's early appearance to restore the Jews to their former power and independence under David.

The religious and civil condition of the Jews at this time was remarkable even for a people that had passed through so many phenomenal situations, in which miraculous intervention was both conspicuous and frequent. Always an intensely, perfervid, religious race, they naturally drifted into beliefs which transcended the faith founded upon the laws of Moses and the teachings of their prophets, and hence they more easily became the dupes of designing hierarchs, such as the rabbis or learned men of the Pharisaic sect were. These laid claim to preternatural powers almost equal to God himself, which they grounded into the people by appealing to a credulity positively amazing. These pretensions were so well substantiated that they set themselves above kings, and exacted and received the reverential respect of the people. They recited the most astounding miracles as evidence of their powers, and their deluded followers sat dumb with amazed admiration before them, and this extraordinary influence they continued to exercise for a period of four hundred years, and until the mask was torn from them by Christ himself.

While parading their own learning and indefinable and illimitable powers over men and elements, the rabbis still held to and taught the coming of one greater than they, a Messiah and Deliverer, who would be the truly Anointed of God. This claim they made in nearly all their prayers and it became a dominant feature of their teaching, founded as it was upon the Messianic prophecies of Ezekiel, Malachi, David, Micah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Zechariah and Daniel. Several times the people thought their hopes were realized in Cyrus,

the thunder-bolt of war; in Zerubbabel, the "Prince of Captivity;" in Maccabeus, that wondrous son of Judah who brought up the people out of the ashes of despair. All these did great works, but they were not of that fullness which satisfied Israel that her Deliverer was indeed come, and the longing eyes of the people continued strained towards the higher kingdom from whence the Divine King was expected soon to descend.

The idea of a speedy coming of the Messiah became so general that it took possession of the Jews to the exclusion of almost every other ambition. The prophecies of Daniel were a constant theme of discussion, because their fulfillment was believed to be so near at hand. The rabbis were united in their faith that He would be born in the flesh at Bethlehem and come out of the tribe of Judah, but that His Messianic power would not be discovered until Elias and the other prophets came as forerunners to announce His mission. But the Christ around whom centred the hopes of the Jews was pictured as a God of war, who would descend upon the enemies of Israel with fire and sword as did David of old, and with as little mercy. "He girds his loins and descends, and orders the battle against His enemies and slays their kings and their chief captains; there is no one so mighty as to stand before Him. He makes the mountains red with the blood of His slaughtered foes: His robes, dyed in their blood, are like the skins of purple grapes. The beasts of the fields will feed for twelve months on the flesh of the slain, and the birds of the air will feed on them for seven years. The Lord will revenge us on the bands of Gog. At that hour will the powers of the nation be broken: they will be like a ship whose tackling is torn away, and whose mast is sprung, so that the sail can be no longer set on it. Then will Israel divide the treasures of the nations among them, a great store of booty and riches, so if there be the lame and blind among them, even they shall have their share." This is the language of the Jerusalem Targum (the Chaldee or Aramaic version of the Old Testament), and it is the reflection of a universal belief prevalent at that time. But more than this, the Jews were so selfish that the Pharisees, or rabbis, maintained that when the Messiah should have winnowed the land of its enemies Judah would become a paradise, a heavenly kingdom transplanted on earth, where labor and worry would never more be known to the chosen people. It was a prognostic of the rabbis that on the day of the Messiah's coming, the earth itself would manifest its joy in a magnificent fruitage, that a handful of corn on the mountain tops would suddenly take root and throw out stalks as large as palm trees and from which innumerable ears would shoot forth which, shaken by a wind from heaven, would be ground into the whitest flour and in such quantity as to feed all the people. Grapes would grow so large that a wagon would not suffice to hold a single one, while a cluster would load a ship, and from them the best wine might be drawn as from a cask. But the surprises that were then to take place were not



NABLUS, OR ANCIENT SHECHEM, BETWEEN MOUNT GERIZIM AND EBAL.—From *The Christian Herald.*

yet fully enumerated, for greater wonders would be seen in the splendors of the capital which the Messiah would establish. The great mountains of Palestine were to be brought together and a new Jerusalem set thereon, covering an area so great that a running horse could not pass between its limits in a day, and the houses of this grand city would be not only of inconceivable splendor, but the palaces therein would be three miles in height. Around the city, it was declared, would be a wondrous wall pierced by numerous gates, composed entirely of precious stones, while the surrounding country would sparkle with prismatic reflections from diamonds, sapphires and rubies, rivaling in beauty the walls and pavements of heaven itself. To add further glory and grandeur to the New Jerusalem, the people therein would all be made prophets and become as gods, while the millennium would be complete by the banishment of all disease and suffering of whatsoever character. Ah, what a dream! What a vision of carnal attainment, of selfish, material aggrandizement, as opposed to the spiritual beauty of a loving, suffering, and all-merciful Messiah, whose mission was conceived in the glorification of the noblest attributes of human kind, and whose kingdom was to be founded upon the holy principles of charity, humility, universal love and immeasurable mercy, in direct opposition to the Jewish beliefs and traditions, which were of a political rather than a spiritual character.

It is a noteworthy fact that the belief in the early coming of the Messiah was not entirely confined to Judah, but was conspicuous in the teachings of eastern sects, being no doubt a transmission of the prophecy of Daniel during the captivity, an inference which we are more ready to assume from the fact that the learned men of the East looked forward to Christ's first appearance in the region about Jerusalem. While there was a universality of belief among the Jews that the sacred advent was near at hand, there was a division of opinion respecting the character which the Messiah would assume. As already described, the rabbis, who composed the learned, or Pharisaic, class of Jews, generally expected His appearance to be made in the person of an all-powerful and self-glorified Prince, whose authority would be immediately acknowledged and through whom the restoration of Israel would be at once accomplished.

But while the rabbis had formerly been accepted as the true successors of the prophets, and to whom the people looked for an interpretation of the laws, the immense influence which their position gave at length led them to an assumption of political as well as priestly prerogatives, and their devoutness gradually gave place to worldly ambitions. At the time of Christ, therefore, the Pharisees had so greatly degenerated that the very name had become a synonym for deceit, flattery, formalism, bigotry, self-complacency and hypocrisy, though a few there were who still held sacred the faith of their fathers and whose piety continued unabated. Among such were Hillel, Simeon, Zacharias, Gamaliel and his pupil,



THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, ON THE SITE OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE, JERUSALEM.—From *The Christian Herald.*

Paul. The more devout among the sect, being nearer to the fount of divine wisdom, and with a truer conception of the character and purpose of the promised Messiah, predicted His coming in a form which would prevent any knowledge of His Godly attributes until Elias should declare Him to the people. This idea, however, was entertained by very few, though it was the hope of every woman in Israel to become the mother of the Redeemer. So great was this maternal ambition that barrenness was a reproach which, though always so regarded among the Jewish women, was considered a disgrace marking the Divine disfavor at this period, and barren women were therefore held in contempt as victims of an unnatural failing. We have illustrations of the shame which followed barrenness in the apocryphal stories which have been handed down to us by ancient writers, concerning the unfruitfulness of Anna, the mother of Mary. By these legends it is declared that Mary was the daughter of Joachim and Anna, simple shepherd



A BETROTHED JEWISH GIRL OF PALESTINE.—From *The Christian Herald*.

folks, who married at an early age and passed the next twenty years bewailing their childlessness. So great was this reproach upon both that it is said Joachim was ordered away from the Temple and his offerings refused, while Anna was denied association with other women. This exclusion so troubled her heart that she fell into a melancholy which even prayer could not solace. At length, as Anna was weeping one day her maid came to her with the consoling assurance that the Lord was about to take away her reproach, and instructed her to put on a head-dress and to array herself in her bridal robes and repair to the garden at the ninth hour. Anna did as she was bid, and taking a place under a laurel tree renewed her prayer to the Lord for offspring, among other things saying, "Woe is me, woe is me, who have no child! Why was I born that I should have become accursed before the children of Israel, and despised, and scorned, and driven away from the Temple of the Lord my God?" As she was praying an angel came to her and announced the glad tidings that a child should soon be born to her, which came to pass in due time, and, as the angel had directed, the babe was called Mary. When she was one year old the infant was blessed by the priests, and two years later was taken to the Temple and there left with virgins until she was twelve years of age, at which time it was said she was possessed of unexampled graces and a piety which was never before equaled. She was distinguished for industry, charity, devotion and modesty, no less than for a melodious voice and a face and form of incomparable beauty. The more exact writers who have attempted to describe her person say she was slender and slightly above middle height, with a fair complexion, blonde hair, rich hazel eyes, ruddy lips and hands of a delicate beauty, while her speech was so gentle and winning that the world might well pause to listen while she spoke.

All this may be tradition, for it is so said, but as the Mother of Jesus we can only picture her to our mind's vision as an embodiment of all that is beautiful; an incarnation of every charm that draws us affectionately to womankind; with voice tenderer than the dove's and sweeter than lute strings struck with practiced hands; with tresses rivaling the waves of imprismed light; with eyes that melted into love, and mouth that opened with orisons, and cheeks that caught the blushes of early morning, and brow that bore the signet of God; a blessed being, giving intimation of the bewildering witchery of celestial spirits, the choir invisible.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANGEL PROPHET.

WE NOW approach an era wondrous for the phenomena, natural and supernatural, which distinguished it. The culmination of Herod's reign in a cloud of terror was not the most remarkable feature attendant upon the induction of the Christian age, for there were portents of a surprising nature to emphasize the expectation of the Lord's speedy coming. The hosts of heaven were singing hallelujahs while burnishing their corselets, and fiends of darkness were marshaling their forces for a combat with the celestial army; a great battle was to be fought, with the earth this time as a battle-ground, and each side had out recruiting officers to bring into the ranks every soul that could lift an arm or raise a voice. Devils were unloosed and went rioting up and down every highway, seizing the unwary, overturning hallowed institutions, exciting the desperate, adding frenzy to diabolism, and sowing broadcast the tares of anarchy in susceptible minds. But there was equal activity among the sunbrowed, the solar-crowned, the light-raimented hosts of the kingdom of perpetual day. Angel bands were resting behind breastworks of opalescent cloud, with their swords gleaming like rays flashed up from the sea when the flood of a morning sun first strikes it. Divine dragoons picketed the Holy Land, ready of foot or swift-moving wings to lend instant aid, while celestial messengers brought every part of Judah into communication, every soul of holiness into rapport, every angel band into action against the powers of Satan.

The contest was to be between the fiends of death and the radiant hosts of eternal life, where the victory should bring a shroud or a crown, a tear or a laugh, a lost world or a glorified kingdom, a hell of anguish or a heaven of perennial joy; and the angels sang, and the light of dawn uprose over the sacred mountains of Palestine, trembling like a million lances in the rush of a charge, and there was a great voice as of the sea and the hills rolled together, "Prepare ye the way for Him who cometh to give you victory over the grave." This voice of promise still rings down the centuries, from out the wilderness, from over the embrasures of Zion, from hill-top of universe to valley of planet, across the bridge that spans the holy age and the present civilization, from hut to cathedral, from the Plutonian shore to the great heart of rejuvenated humanity; and the devils are in banishment, fiends of darkness are back in their deepest caverns, death itself retired before that cry; we feel the thrill of its echoes transmitted through the chain that binds the

world together, and through the ties that connect generation with generation, and through the bond that unites us with God.

The first heavenly manifestation made to the people of Jerusalem, and which gave bold announcement of the speedy coming of the Messiah—the first wonderful revelation which was the beginning of a series of miracles that brought the world into the Divine presence—occurred in the Holy Temple under circumstances which singularly impress us with the favor in which God still held that ancient shrine, profaned as it had been by a thousand excesses, a thousand crimes, and the sacrilege of its priestly votaries, and the kingly voluptuaries who enriched themselves by the spoliation of its treasures. But sacrilege of hypocrites and plunder of kings had not wholly destroyed the germ of righteousness, which was still nourished by a few devout priests who kept fresh the zeal of the old prophets, and were still longing, ever hopeful, firm-believing in an early fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies. The Temple had been recently enlarged and finished in a style of grandeur surpassing even Solomonic magnificence, by the munificent expenditures of Herod, who sought by this exhibition of favor to the Jewish religion to free himself from the hatred and loathing of his subjects. But though gilded by impious hands the Temple was dedicated to God, and the service therein was performed by a holy order of the priesthood ; hence in this sanctuary, which held the fading glory of Judah, was given a manifestation of the Divine presence and a prophecy which in its fulfillment would bring the world to repentance.



A LEVITE OR JEWISH PRIEST.

The Angel's Annunciation.

The Jewish religion was always distinguished for impressive ceremonial, and the services performed in the Temple were a very elaboration of formulary blended with the spectacular. Sacrifices constituted a prime essential of Hebraic worship, and on such occasions as the celebration of the Passover and Day of Atonement,

in addition to other ceremonials, sacrifices were offered at both the morning and evening services. So numerous and exacting were the duties of the Temple priests that a great number were employed who, however, served in turn, coming from all parts of Judah and being housed in the Temple during the short periods of their respective ministrations.

Among the lower class of priests was one Zacharias, whose home was near Hebron, an aged man with a wife named Elizabeth, who had never borne any children. As barrenness was a reproach among the Jews, as already explained, Zacharias and Elizabeth, like others of their people who felt the humiliation of childlessness, bewailed their misfortune, and though both were now grown old they had not yet passed that age when expectation and prayers for fruitfulness were abandoned. Zacharias was called to perform a priestly office in the Temple and at a casting of lots, as was customary, the duty fell to him of placing incense on the coals of the altar of sacrifice and then returning from the sanctuary to the awaiting worshipers outside, whom he was to lead in prayer, or dismiss with benediction.

This duty was considered so sacred and the honor of its execution so great that no priest might perform it more than once, hence he to whom the office chanced by lot to fall was esteemed most highly blessed. In the ministrations which Zacharias was thus called to perform, he had an assistant who heaped up the coals on the altar while incense was being sprinkled on the flames, which sent up a cloud of fragrance typical of the prayers that were now to be offered up to Jehovah by all devout Jews wherever they might be gathered. This being done, the assistant retired, leaving the priest before the veil of the Holy of Holies in prayer for the restoration of Israel through the power of the promised Messiah.

As Zacharias stood praying before the altar, sending up a soulful invocation for the redemption of his people from their sins, as well as from the oppression of their Roman masters, and adding a supplication that God might be pleased to take away the reproach of his childlessness, in the midst of his fervid petitioning he was arrested by the sight of a wondrous vision! Was it a vision or creation? Was it the materialization of pious ambition, or a fantasy of the mind weakened by religious asceticism? Was it the bloom of unwearying prayer and hope, or the blasted bud of crushed aspiration? Perhaps Zacharias himself doubted the reality of his angelic visitor, but from out a dreamy comprehension the holy priest awakened to a true perception of his celestial visitor. There, on the right side of the altar, at the place of honor, stood the radiant form of the great archangel Gabriel, who, to give substance to the day-dream of Zacharias, and to declare his divine mission, thus spoke:

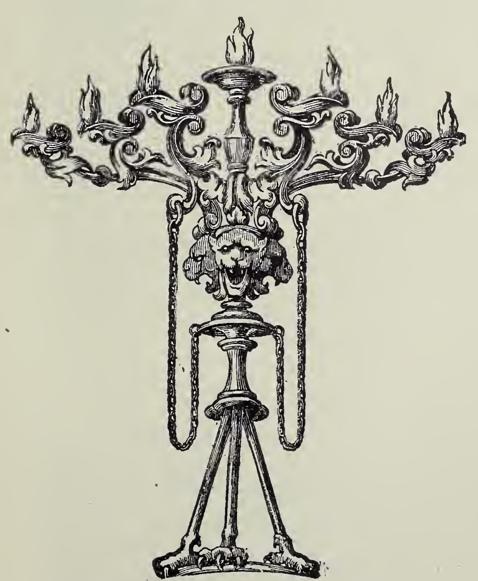
"Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name John.


INCENSE BURNER, USED IN THE TEMPLE.

"And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb.

"And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the parents to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

What impression these words made upon Zacharias is indicated by his reply. Evidently still doubting the substantiality of the vision, but catching a glimpse, through his excited mentality, of the celestial personality, he ventured to inquire: "Whereby shall I know this?" Now was Gabriel's opportunity to prove to the half-dreaming priest the verity of the sacred presence, which he embraced by saying: "Thou shalt be dumb and not be able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words." The evidences of the senses now came full upon Zacharias, for on the instant his tongue lost its cunning, and when the angel disappeared and Zacharias came out of the Temple to the long-waiting people, who lingered to receive his blessing, he was voiceless and trembling with excitement of exultation. By signs only was he able to make known to the worshipers what had befallen him, and after dismissing them, his two weeks of ministration being ended, he left Jerusalem and hastened back to his home, in the region of Hebron, to


GOLDEN LAMP, USED IN THE TEMPLE.

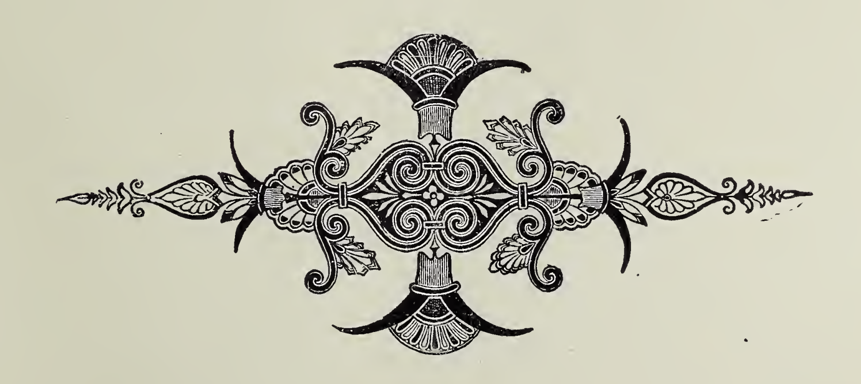


CHURCH OF "ST. JOHN OF THE MOUNTAIN," THE REPUTED BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—From *The Christian Herald.*

acquaint Elizabeth with the announcement of the divine herald. In the quiet retreat of that happy mountain home the aged priest and his wife dwelt in pious communion until the appointed time, when Elizabeth was delivered of a son whom she called John, but her relatives remonstrated against this departure from the almost invariable custom of naming the first-born male child after the father, and hence they insisted that the babe should be called Zacharias. The matter was at length referred to Zacharias, who being yet speechless asked for writing material, which being given him he signified his preference by writing the name JOHN, and so the babe was christened. Immediately the tongue of Zacharias was loosed and he fell to uttering praises to God and to prophesying the speedy coming of the Messiah, and that John should be a forerunner of the Christ calling the world to repentance, saying :

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God."

No further mention is made of John, beyond the announcement that he waxed strong and retired into the wilderness to prepare himself for the ministry, until the day of his issuing forth in the full strength of manhood and spiritual outpouring as a mighty evangelist preparing the way for Jesus, whom he came to declare.



CHAPTER V.

MARY, THE BLESSED AMONG WOMEN.

THE angel's annunciation in the Temple, and the miraculous events which followed up to the naming of John, had impressed the people that a manifestation of divine favor would soon be repeated, for signs and portents seemed to re-enforce the prophecies of a speedy fulfillment of the law and a restoration of Israel. But being in a condition of abject subjection to Roman censors, tax-gatherers, and oppressors of conscience, liberty and religious toleration, the Jews looked forward not only to their liberation but to the re-establishment of their power, which they believed would extend in undisputed acknowledgment over all the world. Their hopes and beliefs were therefore based on those prophecies which they interpreted, in a spirit of arrogance and vanity, as declarations that God would descend upon the earth riding in a chariot of ineffable glory, and, with swoop of majesty, sweep away their enemies and raise up Judah as master of the world. How vain are the conceptions of the haughty, how disappointing the aspirations of the arrogant, how aggravating the ambitions of the selfish and vain-glorious!

Instead of coming with trumpet blare, upborne on golden cloud and moving with swift speed on furious wind; instead of drawing back the empurpled canopy of heaven and dashing out upon His footstool with lances forged from the lightning, and the elements of fire and fury of the mighty deep gathered up with which to overwhelm the enemies of Israel, God chose to reveal not Himself, nor to give exhibition of wrathful spirit, nor make any bewildering manifestations of martial pomp.

Peace had spread her white sails; war had fled the land, and though there might have been oppression, the rod should not be broken by battle-axe, nor Czar of persecution be dethroned by halberd or catapult. Instead of a God of war there was sent a messenger of peace, white-robed and bejeweled with light; star-crowned, joy-crested, with the sweet odors of heaven fresh upon His raiment and the radiance of eternal morning in His face. Nor did this holy nuncio bear tidings to king or priest, or spread His white pinions in splendid palace or magnificent temple, but dropped with the ease of thistle-down, and with the glory that a rainbow kisses the earth, before an Israelitish maid of royal blood but low estate, and gave to her such glorious message as ear of woman hath not heard besides.



HEBRON.

Zacharias and Elizabeth were rejoicing in their humble Hebron mountain-home over the blessings which Gabriel had declared to them, and which a double divine manifestation had convinced them would soon be theirs, feeling, believing, that in all the world there was no couple so happy, so blessed as they. But one hundred miles north of Hebron an event was about to occur which would overshadow in importance and transcend in joy that which brought the aged priest and his wife such ecstasy. In the small village of Nazareth there lived at the time a Jew named Joseph, who, though poor and of such small repute among his people that he existed only in the shadow of his connections, was yet of the royal blood, a direct descendant of David and in the line of kingly succession, but who was in obscurity through the power of the Romans who had destroyed the Davidic dynasty. In this same small village there dwelt also a sweet maiden named Mary, who was likewise of royal blood, but whose graces of person and mind made her queen forever of human kind; the sublime creation of God, the highest type of beauty and perfection, an embodiment of our transcendent conceptions of the heavenly; a being whose attributes were of the earth, saintly, and of the celestial, seraphic; a maid in whose eyes was the tender blue of the violet, with the alabaster of the lily on her brow, the carmine of the rose on her cheek, the red sweetness of the pink on her lips. Her whole being a symphony, and her character a chorus of divine graces. The apocryphal writers and holy traditions represent her as no less heavenly, with a face in which the finger of God had marked the lines of beauty and then placed the seal of glory on her head. Holy Mary! It is this dear conception which makes us gaze with bursting joy through the twilight of centuries at thy enravishing charms of person and the radiance of thy reverence, humility and holiness.

Legends respecting Mary.

It is related by non-canonical writers that when Mary was six months old she was able to walk, but her first tottering footsteps were forbidden by Anna, her mother, who made a vow that the child should not again put her feet to the earth until she had been led into the Temple. When the first year of Mary's life was ended Joachim, her father, gave a grand banquet, to which he invited not only his friends but many distinguished priests and scribes also, who, after the feasting, gave their blessings to the child and consecrated her for such holy purpose as would make her name famous for all time. She was then consigned to a sanctuary where she remained until her fourth year, when she was taken to the Temple and there placed with the virgins. Here her deportment and demeanor were angelic, devoting her hours to praying and spinning until after her twelfth year, when her piety was so great that angels came each day to feed her, and to assist in her instructions, by which aid she became more learned in the law and the prophecies than any rabbi who ministered in the Temple. Not only did she thus show a marvelous

accomplishment, but her beauty, graces and melodious voice were no less remarkable, so that birds came flocking about her, while beasts of every kind accepted her mistressship and gamboled in an ecstasy of rejoicement at her presence.

The Betrothment.

When Mary came out of the congregation of the virgins, schooled in the law, and sanctified in the holy graces, she took upon herself yet higher duties in the natural progression of her career towards a fulfillment of her divine mission. How she met Joseph, who was probably much her senior, we know not, unless tradition reports the circumstances truly, but that the two exchanged loving confidences, declared their affection, vowed their devotion, and pledged their ever unchanging love, we have the testimonies of the apostles as well as of the ages. It was love's bright dream materialized when they sealed their pledges and united their lives with the bond of betrothment, which quickly followed their mutual declarations. The service of betrothment was no less sacred and binding than that of marriage itself, being so recognized by Jewish custom of the time, which required that the ceremony should be performed in the presence of the bride's parents. On such an occasion the



THE ANNUNCIATION.

bridegroom stood beside his bride and the two made their acknowledgments before witnesses, the betrothment being completed by the gift of a piece of money from the groom to his bride. After this performance the two were regarded as husband and wife, though another ceremony was required some time within the year to complete the marriage. During this interval the bride remained with her parents or guardians, to whom she continued to give her services, but no final separation of the couple thus betrothed could be made without a bill of divorcement.

Gabriel's Announcement to Mary.

It was during this brief period of betrothment that the celestial messenger who had appeared to Zacharias six months before came like a holy benediction to Mary in her chamber, bringing tidings which were no less joyful because surprising. Assuming the shape of a man, Gabriel stood suddenly before the devout maid, and thus saluted her: "Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women!" Startled by the appearance, in which she saw only a material form, Mary was troubled to discover the real import of Gabriel's words and purpose, whereupon the angel spoke this blessed and reassuring promise: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God, and behold thou shalt conceive . . . and bring forth a Son; and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

With childlike innocence, but without positive disbelief, such as Zacharias had exhibited, Mary inquiringly answered, as if seeking for explanation of an event which she was now to look forward to, "How shall this be?" She was thoroughly versed in the prophecies respecting a Messiah; she was acquainted with the presages of the rabbis, and being of a receptive nature, with strong imbuement of religious instinct, which was to her a sweet distillment of joy, she was ready to believe that the law of nature was simply God's law subject to His will, and hence Gabriel's message excited her joyful curiosity but not her unbelief. Thus she asked, as a child might seek an explanation of something which it sees but does not understand, "How shall this be?" But there was more to be desired than the assurance that a miracle was about to be performed. Mary had recently been betrothed to Joseph, and, according to the law of Moses, an act of unfaithfulness to the pledge of fidelity subjected the woman to the penalty of death by stoning. This law, however, had fallen into desuetude, but a scarcely less rigorous punishment took the place of the capital penalty, in that the woman became an object of public opprobrium, an outcast, a social leper, a criminal to be loathed by all respectable persons. To a sensitive

nature like Mary's, whose life was one of singular purity and deeply religious conviction, a cloud upon her chastity was more awful than the shadow of death itself. Thus, while receiving the heavenly messenger with a feeling of rapture subdued by the possibility of reproach, she inquired, "How shall this be?" How shall a maid be a mother; how shall a handmaid, even of the Lord, escape the flings of accusers, the contumely of those who make infidelity an unpardonable iniquity; how shall she avoid the scorn of her own household, the condemnation of him whom she had followed with first pledges at the marriage altar? Thus did she eagerly ask, "How shall this be?"

Gabriel perceived the troubled feelings that filled Mary's heart, the joy coupled with desire to know quickly how she should escape the shadow of impurity which might be thrown upon her by those who knew her best, for he hastened to reassure her, by saying:

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee: and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee! therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." This explanation calmed her perturbations, for she was in a sinless condition, having transgressed no law, so that she realized the birth of a child could come to her only through a direct manifestation of God, and the fact would be a culminating demonstration of the Divine favor in her behalf. With perfect resignation and composure she therefore answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

When we consider the general expectancy of the time as to the early coming of the Messiah, and the aspiration of every Jewess to become the mother of the promised Saviour, we can gain some faint conception of the overflowing joy with which Mary received the holy message, the celestial glory that irradiated her heart, the heavenly transports that lifted and dazzled her soul.

The very intimation of motherhood delights every pure woman, while the first pulsation of that life which is a part of her arouses an energy and creates a happiness which thrills the heart as no other feeling can. With the assurances of the angel, which appealed so strongly to her faith, the utterance of her name in kindly familiarity, and the declaration that her cousin, Elizabeth, had received a like manifestation of Divine favor, and three months hence would bear a son, greatly intensified her faith and anticipations.

The Meeting between Mary and Elizabeth.

There was now a delightful secret in the breasts of Mary and Elizabeth, and which we must believe they were anxious to divulge to one another. Mary indeed had been told of the great joy that was soon to be realized by her aged and long-barren cousin, but she wanted confirmation of the annunciation from Elizabeth's own lips, and was perhaps more anxious to bear the news of her own good fortune

to her beloved kinswoman, that together they might rejoice as the most highly blessed of womankind. Actuated by this overmastering desire Mary made quick preparation to visit her aged cousin, whose home, somewhere in the hills near Hebron, was fully one hundred miles distant from Nazareth.



MADONNA AND CHILD.—Photograph from Old Master.

Mary must have been indeed a resolute woman to undertake such a journey. There was no railroad train, nor richly upholstered palanquin at her service; probably not even a camel for one so poor as she to mount. Perhaps a little

burro, the cheapest as well as the most inconvenient means of transportation in all Palestine, might have been at her disposal. But the way was not only long, the route dreary and robber-infested, her comforts few as the discomforts were plentiful, but the road was rock-bestrewn, mountain clasping hand with mountain, and valley tumbling down into gorges, dashing streams swelling into rivers and then halting before barren stretches or overteeming wadys. We do not know that this poor but blessed woman had even the company of a guide, or the help of a relative, or the encouragement of travelers passing over the same route. But she had the greater comforter, guide and companion, a heart filled with joyful expectancy and heavenly assurance, as she went into the hill country with haste to communicate and to receive glad tidings that the holy messenger had announced to her.

The New Testament record is brief, and only Luke has left even a bare statement of the annunciation and a few lines descriptive of the events which followed; but the omission of more extended particulars may be supplied by our imaginations, which appear as natural conclusions based on events which followed immediately after the nativity. If angels, like a mighty host, appeared to Elisha; if a voice was heard by Hagar to save her child from thirst; if Gabriel put on an incarnate form to be a messenger from God; if radiant beings sang hallelujahs in the skies and called the startled shepherds to Bethlehem; if angel hands drew back the prison bars and gave release to Peter, then surely angels must have been companions of Mary on this long journey; angel bands that were sent as a watch, to cheer and protect, to convert a harsh road into an embowered and easy way; to pluck out the stones and plant violets in their places; to hide the natural difficulties under embankments of sweet marjorams and lilies and clematis; to lade the air with perfume and melody, and to make the winds musical with praise and thank offerings. May we not suppose that God was as favorable to Mary on this journey as He was to Jacob or to Joshua? His after-care proves it.

And so in due time Mary arrived at the humble house of Zacharias, and entering therein was received by Elizabeth with evidences of illimitable joy, which was as quickly succeeded by a transport of heavenly delight as the Holy Spirit revealed to her, by a sudden inspiration, "the Mother of her Lord." At the same moment the thrill of motherhood quickened her appreciation of the blessing which had come upon herself and her praises awoke in Mary the sublime poetry of an overjoyed soul, which found expression in one of the most picturesque lyrics to be found in either the Old or New Testament.

The Return to Nazareth and Doubts of Joseph.

Mary remained with her relatives, in or near Hebron, for a period of nearly three months, and then returned to Nazareth. We are not told why she did not

defer her departure for home until after the birth of Elizabeth's child, and the cause is shrouded in much doubt. If she abode with her cousin for three months the birth of John must have been near at hand when she left, and in our ignorance of the circumstances which prompted her seemingly sudden return to Nazareth, we wonder that she did not remain with her aged cousin through so critical a period, especially as she must have believed that some supernatural manifestation would occur at, or immediately following, the birth. But we must not ignore the condition of Mary's mind at this time. While her soul was in exaltation there was possibly depression mingled with her joy. She had not communicated the tidings of promised motherhood to Joseph, nor to her relatives in Nazareth. Perhaps the date of her public marriage was some months yet in the future, as the services of the betrothment generally preceded the actual marriage one year, but she had many duties to perform, many friends and relatives to apprise of her condition, and no doubt she was under obligations which compelled her to return within the period she had spent with Elizabeth. Again, it may be that her marriage to Joseph had been fixed to occur on a date which was very near at hand ; so that we may surmise many reasons for her abrupt departure.

Mary's journey on her return to Nazareth was probably accomplished in the same manner and under the same gracious auspices and angelic escort as her trip to Hebron. She passed through the same memorable valleys, over the same historical mountains, and by the same sacred places made illustrious by mighty events in the history of her people. On the route she no doubt saw the field of Machpelah, where Abraham and his spouse were buried, and the famous oak under which the patriarch often sat ; there lay Megiddo where Josiah was sacrificed, and lofty Tabor from whence Barak rushed down in fiery fury upon Sisera ; and the great plain of Esdraelon, where Sisera's army was overthrown ; along her path babbled the waters of the Kishon, which had centuries before borne the blood of the false prophets to the sea. These places must have aroused in her receptive nature the greatest enthusiasm, but what must have been her feelings when passing through the paradisiacal valley of Shechem ? Here seemed to linger the spirit of ancient Israel ; here was the burnt-offering place of the nation, the most sacred ground of the tribe. On the south side of the valley lay Mount Gerizim, eight hundred feet high, from which was promulgated the Law anew, and blessings upon Israel ; and Mount Ebal on the north, upon which Moses commanded stones to be set up with words of the Law thereon, and from whence curses were called down by the people if they disobeyed Jehovah. Here Joshua assembled the people for his last counsel ; here the ten tribes renounced the house of David. In this valley Abraham first pitched his tent and built an altar under the oak of Moreh, when on his way to the land of promise. Here was the well of Jacob, at which Mary may have quenched her thirst, and paused to reflect on the wonderful

changes that had occurred since Shechem was made a place of refuge, and since Joseph was buried in the field near by.

For a hundred prodigious reasons this journey between Nazareth and Hebron was a remarkable one to Mary, and must have made a lasting impression upon her, which she seems to have voiced directly upon her meeting with Elizabeth. But when she had returned to Nazareth the patriotic feelings excited by the scenes of her nation's history became subdued under the influence of a realization of her condition and relation to Joseph. Her spiritual nature was aflame with joy, while her still conscious material existence was disturbed by a reflection on the call of God, which had placed her in a compromising position before her affianced, as well as before her relatives and friends. The secret must soon declare itself, and this realization, aided by promptings of the Holy Spirit, and a consciousness of her own purity, led to a revelation of the wonderful manifestation which the Lord had made to and through her. Although Mary must have related the strange facts with virtuous speech, Joseph was ill-inclined to accept with confidence the truth of her assertion, and therefore for a time secretly, within himself, thought that his honor required him to withdraw the avowals which he had made at the ceremonial of betrothment. But while doubting, he was probably not without some faith in the story of Mary ; or his love for her was so great as to give a partial condonement of her fault, hence he was anxious to protect her against opprobrium, and which he accordingly resolved to do by a quiet absolvement of his vows, instead of publicly applying for a bill of divorce. It may be that his purpose was rather to defer a consummation of the marriage until such a time as he might be able to discover the truth of her declarations, than to renounce her entirely. But God soon came to the relief of the sorrowing lovers by sending an angel to Joseph, in a dream, with these cheering words : "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife : for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," etc. In this speech we observe the custom of the country as well as the relation which, in God's sight, Mary bore to Joseph, for the angel distinctly calls Mary *his wife*, which the ceremony of betrothment, under the Jewish law, instituted and virtually accomplished.

Recognizing the angelic injunction and assurance, Joseph and Mary immediately perfected their marriage, and both rejoiced in the double blessing which they had received at the hand of God.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROUGH CRADLE OF OUR KING.

THE second and complete marriage ceremony which brought Mary and Joseph into holy relationship under the law, was performed, no doubt, very soon after Mary's return to Nazareth. Our sense of justice will not permit us to believe that the Lord long deferred His revelation of the divine conception, or that Joseph was willing to permit his betrothed to rest under the cloud of imputation which a prompt celebration of the marriage would remove. Poor in worldly possessions, he was rich in noble attributes; despoiled of a kingly inheritance, he was the more appreciative of the holy qualities of honor, and a compassion for the infirmities of ambition; lowly in his estate, he was more receptive to the voice of conscience, more prompt in obedience to the will of God.

The supernatural appearance of Gabriel to Elizabeth and to Zacharias, and the strange events which followed as a sequence, to the time of the marriage of Joseph and Mary, were but a prelude to even more astonishing manifestations of the Holy Spirit, in the co-operation of many things to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Micah, "And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel." These prophetic words had peculiar application, which the people interpreted rightly as foreshowing the birth of the Messiah to occur in Bethlehem; but it had yet wider significance. Since the revolt of the ten tribes, and the disruption of Solomon's kingdom at Shechem, the nation had been divided into the kingdom of Judah and that of Israel. This division proved disastrous to both branches, as it led to interminable wars for nearly three centuries, and to the final bondage of the Jews to the Assyrians. Their liberation was accomplished through the influence of Daniel, after seventy years, but though the Temple was rebuilt and efforts at consolidation of the race were made by a restoration of the old hierarchy, Nehemiah proved to be the last of the line of prophets, and both Judah and Israel lost their distinctness, while the homogeneity of the people was utterly destroyed. The prophecy of Micah, made three centuries before the captivity, clearly traces the march of the invading Assyrians through Palestine, and declares the woes which came upon the people for their corruption. After uttering this prophecy he pronounced the great glory that should come to the nation, dissevered as it was, through a Messiah who would rule both Judah and Israel. Thus this great herald of the future proclaimed the coming of a GOVERNOR who would bring peace to all the

world, using the illustration of a united Judah and Israel as a symbol of the restoration of a universally acknowledged ruler before whom the nation would ultimately not only bow in allegiance, but of whose kingdom there would be no end.

The Registration for Taxation.

The singular co-operation of events to the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy is particularly observed in the decree issued by Augustus Cæsar for an estimate of the resources, and an enumeration of the people of the many provinces that com-



CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY AT BETHLEHEM, COVERING THE SITE OF THE ANCIENT MANGER.

posed his empire. Ostensibly, this census was taken for the purpose of fixing the levies of tax which might be equitably collected from the dependencies of the Roman government, but its application to Judea seems to have been rather an initial act, under God, towards the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy. At the time the decree was published, Judea was not publicly recognized as a Roman province, but rather as a dependency. Herod was nominally king of Judea, but in fact he was only a viceroy and a Roman subject, who had to observe the edicts of Cæsar. But to give the appearance of independence he recognized the Jewish customs, and, therefore,

in obeying the decree he issued an order that every family within his government should proceed to the place where their respective genealogical records were kept for enrollment. As both Mary and Joseph were of the lineage of David, in pursuance of Herod's order they proceeded to Bethlehem for registration.

Thus the edict of Augustus Cæsar, issued when the world was at peace, and without any apparent reason for taking an enumeration, since the taxes were collected in Judah by Herod, who in turn paid the fixed tribute to Cæsar, appears conclusively to have been an instrumentality of the Divine will. The birth of Jesus was so near at hand that God moved the Emperor of Rome to do the one necessary thing that would fulfill the words of Micah.

In obedience to the order of Herod, Joseph and Mary made ready immediately for the journey to Bethlehem, which lies almost due south of Nazareth, and about fifteen miles north of Hebron. The road from Nazareth to Bethlehem was therefore the same as that over which Mary had traveled on her way to visit Elizabeth, and the scenes which called up patriotic as well as pious reflections on that journey were yet fresh in her mind. Being well acquainted with all the Messianic prophecies she could not be insensible to the singular timing of events which of themselves foretold a speedy and exact fulfillment of the prophet's announcement, and her heart and soul must have been aroused to intense jubilation as she realized the synchronism of the enforced visit to Bethlehem, the fulness of her period, and the expiration of the time fixed by Daniel for the Saviour's birth.

The journey was completed without special incident, of apostolic record, but upon reaching the ancient place of David, Mary and her husband found that so large a throng of strangers, brought together for the same purpose, had preceded them that all the public lodging places in the town of three thousand inhabitants were already occupied. What! no place to house the royal mother? No couch in which to lay the king of earth? No lords of state awaiting in antechamber? No messengers mounted at the doorway ready to herald the advent from city to city? No medical skill in attendance? No satin-lined cradle to receive the infantile guest? No, none!

God in a Manger.

But humans must be sheltered as well as beasts; some place must be found. If not among the lords, then among the lowly; if not among the lowly, then let it be among the beasts, for these poor creatures will not refuse to share their quarters, even though they stand in narrow stalls and feed at the hands of those who begrudgingly give small allowances of food while taxing them to the limit of endurance. So Mary and Joseph, finding no welcome in either mansion or cottage, are forced to seek shelter among the beasts, to accept the discomforts of a stable even at a time the most critical, at the approachment and at the fulfillment of maiden motherhood. And in a stable among the asses, and cows, and the

camels, while the air outside was disturbed by the vexious cries of muleteers, hostlers and camel drivers, Mary bowed herself and was delivered of her first-born, the joint-heir of God; the arch-king; a monarch upon whom the night pointed her bediamonded finger, while the door of heaven set wide open to give the angels sight of Him; and orchestral batons of light waved oratorios of the Messiah across the sky and the minstrelsy of heaven flung out melodies of glory and good-will.

But while heaven was all aglow with joy, the Son of God was not yet raised from the straw in the manger where his mother had laid him, covered with coarse linen; nor was the poor mother yet ministered to in her many needs. For her there was neither comfort nor privacy. A better adapted place hath the eaglet in the eyrie; hath the whelp in the lion's lair. The exile of heaven lieth down upon the straw; the first night out from the palace of heaven, spent in an outhouse. One hour after laying aside the robes of heaven, dressed in a wrapper of coarse linen. One would have supposed that Christ would have made a more gradual descent, coming from heaven first to a half-way world of great magnitude, then to Cæsar's palace, then to a merchant's palace in Galilee, then to a private home in Bethany, then to a fisherman's hut, and last of all to a stable. No! No. It was one leap from the top to the bottom!

RUINS OF ANCIENT INN AT BETHLEHEM.

Let us open the door of the caravansary in Bethlehem and drive away the camels. Press on through the group of idlers and loungers. What, O Mary, no light? "No light," she says, "save that which comes through the door." What, Mary, no food? "None," she says, "only that which is brought in the sack on the journey." Let the Bethlehem woman who has come in here with kindly attentions put back the covering from the babe that we may look upon it. Look! Look! Uncover your head. Let us kneel. Let all voices be hushed. Son of Mary! Son of God! Child of a day—monarch of eternity! Omnipotence sheathed in that babe's arm. Omniscience strung in the optic nerve of that child's eye. That voice to be changed from the feeble plaint to a tone that shall wake the dead. Hosanna! Hosanna! Glory be to God that Jesus came from throne to manger, that we might rise from manger to throne, and that all the gates are open, and that the door of heaven that once swung this way to let Jesus out, now swings the other way to let us in. Let all the bellmen of heaven lay hold the rope, and ring out the news: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for to-day is born in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ, the Lord!"

Oh, Glorious Night!

Bethlehem lies upon a hillside overlooking a beautiful valley, rich with succulent grasses on which great flocks of sheep were sent to graze in the time of Christ, and over which shepherds were appointed to watch. It was so in the days of David, perhaps long before, and it is so still. These shepherds were accounted faithful, honest and religious; their occupation has ever been a symbol of humility and providential care, and the shepherd's crook has been made to take its place in church ritualism as a token of complacency with the Divine will, as well also to serve as an emblem of priestly authority.

It is not strange that to these faithful watchers the first news of the birth should be conveyed; but it was not by messengers a-foot, nor by acclaims of priests, nor by cymbals and hautboys in the hands of worshipers. The effulgence of the day would have been needed to give them dispatch. The time was night, a holy night, when silence was nature's invocation, and the stars blazed their orisons with tremblings of ecstasy. While "night," in all languages, is the symbol for gloom and suffering, it is often really cheerful, bright and impressive. I speak not of such nights as come down with no star pouring light from above, or silvered wave tossing up light from beneath—murky, hurtling, portentous—but such as you often see when the pomp and magnificence of heaven turn out on night-parade; and it seems as though the song which the morning stars began so long ago were chiming yet among the constellations, and the sons of God were shouting for joy. Such nights the sailor blesses from the forecastle, and the trapper on the vast prairie, and the belated

traveler by the roadside, and the soldier from the tent, earthly hosts gazing upon heavenly, and shepherds guarding their flocks a-field, while angel hands



THE ANGEL APPEARING TO THE SHEPHERDS.

Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

above them set the silver bells a-ringing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." And on this blessed night the angel

of the Lord rode out from the mansions of alabaster, down the steep from the skies, drawing with him streams of dazzling radiance like shadows of sun and stars, and with a rush of glories floated over the heads of the startled shepherds as they were keeping their quiet, perhaps half-sleeping watch. It was Gabriel again, the holy messenger, who had appeared to Zacharias, and to Mary, and to Joseph in a dream, who now came bearing more joyful tidings than were ever before unfolded.

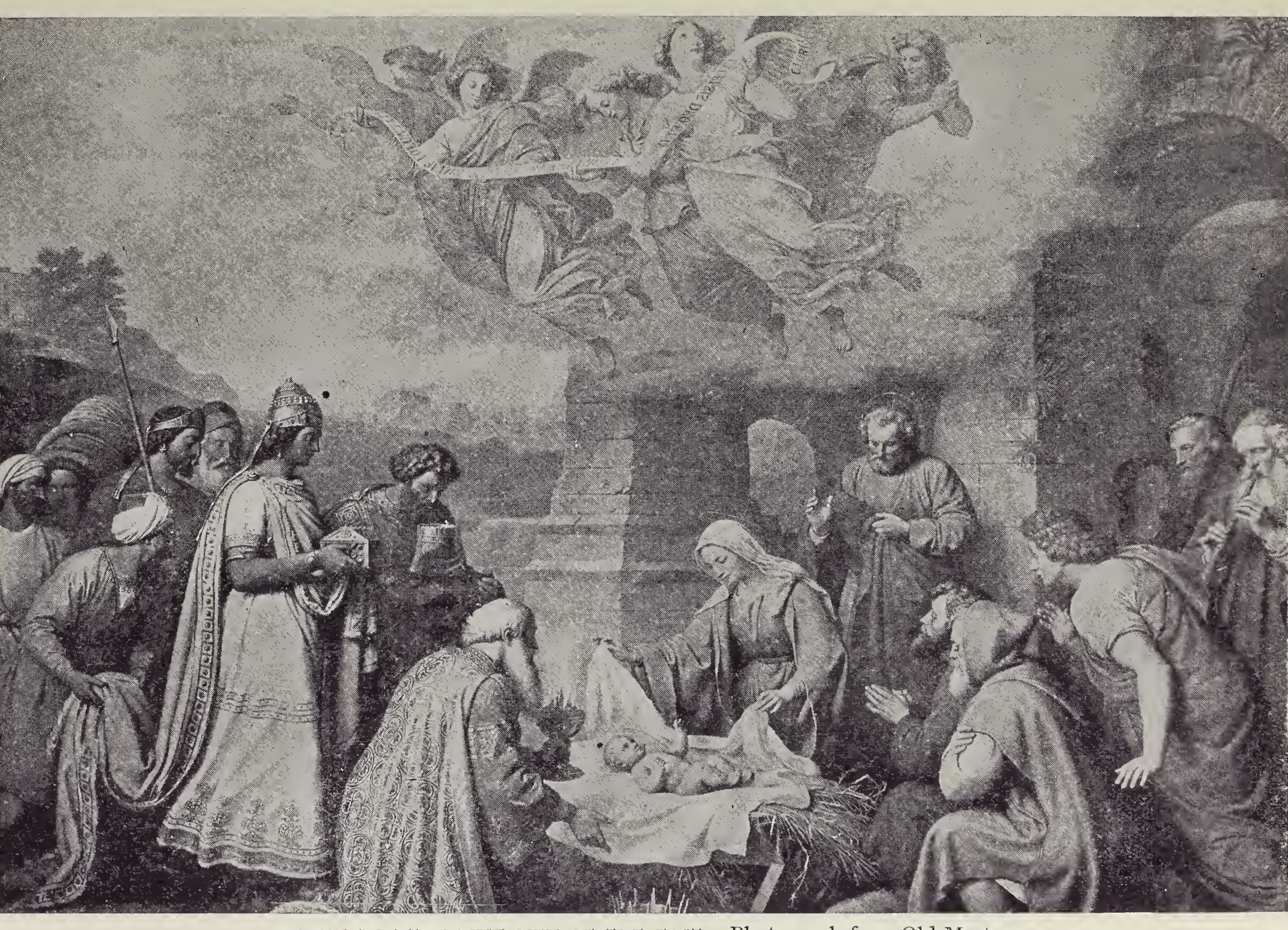
But a flaming presence, at once so awful and magnificent, struck the simple shepherds with fear, for they did not immediately perceive the import of the angel's coming. Fear had fallen on Zacharias, fear had fallen on Mary, and fear had now come upon the perhaps less pious shepherds; and I imagine that a sight of so wondrous a spectacle, a revelation of sublime glorification floating in a blazing sea, would bring a flush of fear to the bravest heart; but as the shining messenger calmed the perturbations of the ministering priest and the holy virgin, so did he at once speak peace to the shepherds by these inspiring words:

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is CHRIST the Lord, and this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

To the splendor of the holy messenger there suddenly flamed up a yet greater light, throwing its radiance higher in the sky, until there was revealed to the startled shepherds the vision of a heavenly host, an angelic band raimented with an effulgence that flooded the fields afar; a constellation of immortals that bejeweled both earth and sky with an ineffable illumination, and from this holy choir there poured forth a song of triumphant joy, a chorus of blissful oblation, a symphony of rapturous pronouncement, an oratorio of doxology filled with glory and good-will.

The Shepherds at the Manger.

Before this glorious vision the shepherds lost all fear, and alarm gave place to blessing; the hope of the pious watchers and the expectation of Israel were now realized, and so the shepherds hastened into the town to behold and to worship the infant Lord. Through street and alley, in and out through by-ways and encampments, they made their way until at last a small light piercing the darkness at the mouth of a cave directed them to the SACRED PRESENCE, where they found the babe lying on the straw of a manger and the Holy Mother bending above Him in maternal ministration. After paying their devotions "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."



HOMAGE OF THE WISE MEN OF THE EAST.—Photograph from Old Master.

The cave or grotto in which the birth of our Lord took place is still pointed out to pilgrims who visit the town of Bethlehem. Above it the Emperor Adrian once erected a temple in honor of Venus and Adonis, intending the act not so much as a mark of respect to those heathen deities as a sign of his irreverence and ridicule of the spot which tradition invested with such sacred memories and reverent regard. But even the hands of a king may not oppose the will of God, or of the people, and those therefore who came to mock the name of Jesus by an indulgence in obscene orgies in the heathen temple were overcome by their own profanity, and as a poet happily expressed it "remained to pray."

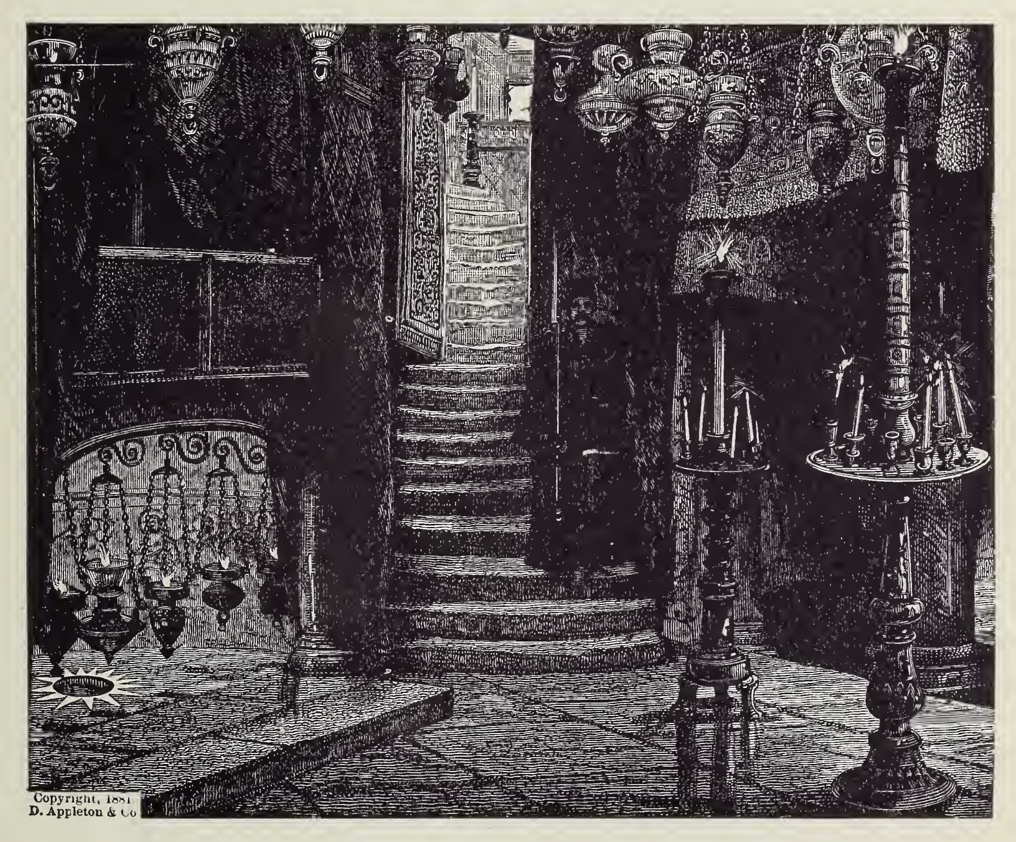
Later this sacrilegious monument was destroyed and the Grotto of the Nativity was consecrated into a church and the manger into an altar. The approach to this holy place where Jesus was born is by a descent of several steps, which admits the visitor into a considerable chamber lighted by sixteen lamps pendant from the roof. The cavern, or grotto, is of an irregular shape with a small compartment cut out from the larger, in the floor of which is a large silver star bearing this inscription in Latin, "In this place JESUS CHRIST was born of the VIRGIN MARY." The manger is also pointed out, and is religiously protected, as well as adorned, by an encasement of marble, before which incense-burning lamps are kept constantly aflame.

The Grotto of the Nativity is one of perhaps a hundred similar excavations in and about Bethlehem, and they are no less common in a greater part of Central Palestine. The hillsides are stony, but of a chalky limestone formation which is easily cut, and hence such excavations are made to serve for both habitations and stalls for cattle. Among the poorest classes, indeed, single excavations, and again with sometimes two or three chambers, are made to serve the double purpose of home and stable, and it was no doubt in such a one that our Lord was born.

The Dedication to God.

On the eighth day after the birth, in accordance with an ancient law and invariable usage among the Jews, the YOUNG CHILD was probably carried to the Temple and there presented to the priests for circumcision, which was a rite indicative of a dedication of infancy to the God of Israel. The ceremony may have been performed in a synagogue of Bethlehem, but as Jerusalem was only six miles distant, and the Temple was regarded with great reverence, especially by those of such devout minds and pious reflections as Mary, who, legend declares, was instructed there, we are almost forced into the belief that she selected this greater synagogue of the Lord in which the dedication should be made. At this ceremony the name JESUS, pronounced at the annunciation, was given to the Child, who was thus made a member of the congregation of Israel.

The Jews, as previously observed, were remarkable for their dogmatic conformity to old established rites, and a rigorous attention to their religious ritualism. Among these requirements was one which forbade a mother to appear in public, or to touch any sacred thing, until a period of forty days after the birth of her male child ; and this exclusion was necessary for a space of sixty-six days after the birth of a daughter, at the end of which respective times the mother



THE GROTTO UNDER THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY.

was required to repair to some holy place, a synagogue, or the Temple to receive from a priest the rite of purification. Thus Mary was in seclusion thirty-two days after the circumcision of her Babe, which term she doubtless spent in praise offerings at Bethlehem, perhaps in the house of some newly-found and sympathizing friend, for it appears from the account given by Matthew that she sojourned in that place for two months after the nativity.

The Visit to the Temple.

At length the time for Mary's purification was at hand, and we may imagine with what joy she hailed the termination of her enforced isolation, the social ostracism, the separation from friends, the long retirement in gloomy seclusion. And we may also picture the delight which she now felt in a presentation of her first-born, the thrill of expectation, the gladsome exhilaration that fills the heart of a young mother, and especially of her who was now giving nourishment to a princeling whose life was to be the light of a world. And at the end of the fortieth day we can almost hear her cheerful voice as she must have called to Joseph, like a May queen on the morning of her coronation: "Get thee ready, Joseph; haste and saddle up the ass, the precious BABE is even now ready, and the bag of provisions is waiting by the door." And Joseph, responsive to her bidding, perhaps no less joyful, hurried to the stall, which was probably a chamber in the habitation, and leading out a little fluffy, demure and very ancient looking burro, placed Mary and the Child thereon, and with staff in hand to give him aid over the stony way, the party set out for Jerusalem. The road was rough, even though a highway of common travel, passing around the base of a considerable hill and leading on by many memorable places, and up the rich valley of Rephaim, where giants were once supposed to dwell; with Mount Zion rising loftily on the south as if to excite remembrance of its desecration by the camp of Pompey; and by the amphitheatre of Herod in which revolting games and sacrifices to heathen deities were common as entertainments for the people only a few years before. Ay, a memorable journey, well calculated to excite emotion in an impressionable nature, such as Mary's, until the feeling of horror and revolting reflection was suddenly dissipated by a sight of the Holy City and the dazzling splendor of the great Temple bursting upon her vision.

Magnificence of the Temple.

Not only was the sight of the Temple a spiritual consolation and one which aroused patriotic impulses as well as religious enthusiasm, but the sacred and monumental edifice was of such extravagant splendor that no eye might gaze upon it without a feeling of bewildering surprise and admiration. There first arose before the vision of the visitor approaching from the south the promontory of Ophel, which was the residence of the Levites. At its foot was the Pool of Siloam, and midway on its eastern face was the Fount of the Virgin. Higher up, and on the apex, was the Royal Porch of the Temple, white as snow under a cloud, and bright as a mirror when struck by the sun. On one side was a stone wall of extraordinary height, which served as a foundation for the Temple, and which to the beholder appeared like a link of masonry connecting the valley with the skies. The Tower of David, which served as an armory for the nation,

reared its huge size as a sentry guarding the Temple, beyond which were the cloisters and then the outer court, the entrance to which was through an archway over which was a stone screen nearly five feet in height. On this screen was written an order, in the Greek and Roman languages, forbidding the entry of any Gentile. Inside this outer court was a large open space which had been converted into a bazaar and market-place, where bullocks, sheep, doves and pigeons were sold for sacrificial offerings, and where money-changers had their offices for the exchanging of coins brought by worshipers living in the several provinces tributary to the Holy Land. Beyond this outer court and approaching the Temple proper was an elegant Mosaic pavement which led up to "the Gate Beautiful," which Josephus declares was forty feet in height and so heavy that it required the combined effort of twenty men to open or close. This gate was made of Corinthian brass kept burnished so brightly that it was like the sun, and above it Herod had caused to be fixed the Roman Eagle as a sign of the dependency of Israel on the Roman government. For this reason the Jews passed through this gateway with such rebellious feelings as characterized the Swiss peasantry when they bowed to Gessler's hat.



THE SILVER STAR MARKING THE PLACE OF THE SAVIOUR'S BIRTH.

Besides the Gate Beautiful there were nine other entrances with doors of little less magnificence, covered as they were with silver and gold. These gates admitted into yet another smaller court and to a flight of steps which led to a considerably elevated platform on which was the Court of the Priests, and in the centre of which was the Altar of Burnt-offering and the Brazen Laver; while in the rear was the Holy Place, separated from the court by a rich tapestry embroidered in scarlet, blue and purple, and supported by golden hooks fastened in five pillars of shittim wood veneered with gold. This veil was hung in front of the sanctuary, or Holy Place, behind which none

but priests were permitted to pass. A second veil, of yet richer fabric and ornamentation, separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, which was parted only once a year by the High Priest and that on the DAY OF ATONEMENT.

It was to the court of the Priests that Mary brought her Babe for the service of dedication to God and her own purification. This ceremony was simple, being little more than the administration of a priestly blessing, but the parent was required to present for sacrifice a lamb, if the applicant was wealthy, or a pair of turtle doves, if poor. Besides this there was required to be paid the sum of five shekels, equivalent to about $3.12½ of our money, as a redemption fee.

The Declaration and Prophecy of Simeon and Anna.

As Mary was presenting her first-born, amid a crowd of waiters, some of whom were present as spectators and many others who had come for the same purpose that brought her, a holy and very aged man, named Simeon, who had faithfully followed the Mosaic law and lived in glorious expectation of the coming of a Redeemer, was suddenly, by inspiration, made to recognize in Mary's Babe the "Messiah of God." Therefore, immediately after the ceremony of dedication and purification was complete, he approached the Madonna with reverently outstretched hands, and took the Babe in his arms and raising his eyes to heaven poured out his gracious acknowledgments to God, saying, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." The spirit of the Holy Ghost being upon him he spake then as a prophet, through the understanding given him by God, to Mary: "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign that shall be spoken against: Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." This prophecy was singularly fulfilled in the crucifixion, and with the divine light in Mary's soul she may well have "marveled at those things which were spoken of Him."

But to the recognition of Simeon there was the re-enforcement of a like declaration from a prophetess named Anna, who had spent nearly all the eighty-four years of her life in the Temple, and who had given all her days to a rigorous observance of the holy ordinances, to the attainment of those graces which bring the soul into perfect rapport with the Deity. She had lost her husband after only seven years of marriage, when she must have been still young, but she gave her broken heart to the Lord and thenceforth, as Luke says, "she departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." Being of the tribe of Asher she no doubt came from some town in Galilee and spent her days in the Temple in such worshipful reverence that her sayings became oracular and she was esteemed a prophetess. To her, therefore, was also given a revelation

of the infant Messiah, and like Simeon she broke forth into thanksgivings, and spoke to the people of the Redeemer who had now come.

The service of presentation in the Temple having been completed, Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem, where directly after there was another manifes-



POOL OF SILOAM AS IT NOW APPEARS.

tation attesting the Messiahship of the Babe, in the visit of wise men from the East, come by Divine direction to pay their homage, and to bring the first acknowledgment from the Gentile world.

CHAPTER VII.

VISIT OF THE WISE MEN FROM THE EAST.

MANY theological writers have speculated and theorized, and profane historians have expended a wealth of erudition and investigation, in a vain effort to solve the riddle of "the wise men of the east."

Long before the captivity of seventy years the Chaldean soothsayers were known as astrologers, who also laid claim to the possession of occult powers. In the days of Moses magicians were common in Egypt, and whether we go east or west over the course of centuries, we invariably find that every country and every people has some kind of foretellers of future events, or some dealers in magic influence, being known under a great number of appellations, such as seer, prophet, medicine man, sorcerer, wizard, geomancer, Sibyl, Python, Monitor, Pythia, Obeah-man, medium, etc. In all ages, too, the necromantic art is joined heart in hand with humbuggery to make victims of the credulous. But man is an imitator of God, so far as his abilities permit of imitation, and as God has chosen to give striking manifestation, in special instances, of His Power over natural laws, so men with unholy aspirations have attempted by delusions to give counterfeit exhibitions of almightiness, and though their deceits are often exposed there is still no lack of believers.

In the earlier years there were many wondrous evidences afforded of God's immediate direction of His people; perhaps we have as many positive evidences of like watchful care and influence this day; but in the age preceding and contemporary with Christ there were occasional visibilities of God's outward workings which brought man into a material relationship with Him. To promote this connection a school of prophets was founded, in which Samuel was the first regent. From the colleges at Ramah, Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho, nearly all the great prophets graduated and became mouth-pieces of Jehovah to declare His will to kings and to the people. When the Jews were taken captive by the Babylonians, about 580 B. C., they were immediately introduced to a new form of religion, based largely on occultism, and which was taught in schools established for the instruction and development of what was termed Magi, from whence is derived our word Magician. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon and its dependencies, was distinguished for his wisdom as a ruler, and he was also a good judge of human nature. He early recognized the superior learning of his Jewish captives and made their talents serviceable to him in numerous ways. Many of the



THE HOLY FAMILY.—Photograph from Celebrated Painting. (169)

captives, most promising for the purpose, were accordingly put into the hands of Chaldean instructors for a course of schooling, among the number being Daniel, who, by God's aid, became one of the four great prophets. Daniel first distinguished himself as an interpreter of the king's dreams, by which he rose to the governorship of one or more of the Babylonish provinces.

The Chaldean Sages.

But the Chaldeans were soothsayers and astrologers, rather than prophets, who cast horoscopes by reading the stars, and laying claims to ability to foretell events, they received the designation of "Wise Men." They are certainly entitled to the credit of having reduced astrology to the science of astronomy, but that they were frequently impostors is plainly evident. Among the Medes and Persians they were especially honored, and we have historical accounts of them appearing and practicing their arts in places remote from the country to which they belonged. Rabmag, or chief of the Magi, was sent to Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; and his followers, or believers in his art of divination, became so large as to constitute a religious caste. Six hundred years later, in the time of Christ or shortly after, the New Testament contains a brief record of the remarkable doings of Simon Magus and Bar-Jesus, who belonged to the Magian caste, and who came to the Holy Land to perform their peculiar feats of legerdemain.

Zoroastrianism was perhaps an outgrowth of Magianism, but it was like refined gold after the dross has been eliminated. Zoroaster may have lived 1000 B. C. or 500 B. C., or not at all, for history is too vague or confusing to admit of certainty on these points, but whether real or only a personification of the ideal in man according to our material and spiritual reasoning, his philosophy blends so agreeably with the teachings of Christ that he appears almost as a herald of the "Light of the World." Fire was his visible symbol of God, because everything is purified that passes through that element, and Christ made use of the same symbol on several occasions when denouncing shams and enlightening the people in their duty to God.

The Teachings of Zoroaster.

The purity of Zoroastrianism is not alone to be discovered in the profession of faith and the charity of its teachings, but a loftier conception of the attributes of DIVINITY is observed in the hope which it excited of the appearance of a Messiah who would come, clothed with all power, to reform the world and establish a reign of universal peace. This tradition, possibly influenced by the Jews during the captivity, led the followers of Zoroaster to believe that this Messiah would be a "King of the Jews," an inference made almost conclusive by the form of inquiry addressed by the "Wise Men" who came out of the East to worship the infant Jesus.



THE VIRGIN MARY.—Photograph from Old Master.

As Christ was sent to redeem the world, so God prepared the world to receive Him. An expectation was therefore implanted in the minds of the worshipful people of the east, who had assimilated with the Jews brought among them as captives, and as God sent His messengers to apprise the shepherds on the hillsides about Bethlehem, so we must believe that He commissioned angels to bear the glad tidings of the Nativity to holy or "Wise Men" on the banks of the Tigris or Euphrates.

But if there were base pretenders—ready to profit by the credulity of ignorant people—among the Magi, it is but one of the world's examples, for among the wisest and the holiest there have ever been base counterfeits, hypocrites and deceivers, just as weeds will seek companionship with the best fruits of the ground. It is a fact, however, that the Magi, or Chaldean astrologists, were the wisest men of the age; they were not only astrologists but also naturalists, scientists, and through their experiments in pursuit of the unattainable—in the transmutation of metals—they actually transmuted alchemy into chemistry. And in their study of the occult art of astrology they became astronomers. More than two thousand years before Christ these Magi knew the precession of the equinoxes, and they had also correctly measured the distance of the sun from the earth.

The Book of Job gives us to know that there were men of that ancient time who knew the earth was globular. These "Wise Men" were acquainted with the arts of the Egyptians, and understood how to embalm bodies as we cannot understand to-day. The lost arts are as great as the living arts; what we invent now is generally only a rediscovery. Thus, then, we know that the Magi were indeed "Wise Men," and the three, representing youth, middle age and the wisdom of fourscore years, were perhaps the most distinguished of Magian teachers, and for their learning were selected by God to bear witness of the Lord to Gentile nations.

Adoration of the Three Kings.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold there came *wise men* from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him."

Three kings, as tradition tells us, named respectively Gaspar, Melchior and Belthazar, had been startled by the sudden blazing out against the sky of a star, a comet, or a pillar of fire. Perhaps they were astronomers taking an observation with instruments the invention of which was lost until Galileo rediscovered the magnifying power of lenses. Or, they may have been priests performing rites in a fire temple when they suddenly beheld rising above the flame they tended a brighter light hanging low in the heavens and surrounded by angels. If Constantine saw a sign in the sky in the form of letters of light rainbowing a shadowy



JOSEPH, MARY AND THE CHILD JESUS ON THE WAY TO EGYPT.

cross ; if Paul was stricken blind by a flash and heard a voice of complaint coming out of a cloud ; if John on lonely Patmos beheld so many strange visions, and Peter was rescued by an angel, then we cannot affect surprise at the suggestion that the "three wise men" received a communication from God which made the star of their vision a guide to lead them to the "YOUNG CHILD." Or, perceiving a wondrous light in the sky, they may have been forcibly reminded of Balaam's prophecy when he declared that one day a star would come out of Jacob and a sceptre rise out of Israel (Numb. xxiv. 17). In any aspect that we permit our imaginations to view the surroundings and influences which brought the "wise men" to do homage to the infant Christ, we cannot fail to see the workings of God to the fulfillment of prophecy. To the "wise men" was sent a guiding star that after seeing and worshiping the babe Messiah they might return to their own country and bear testimony to that light which should lighten the Gentiles, as Simeon had declared ; and that they might also be witnesses to a verification of Balaam's prediction in the birth of a Prince whose sceptre, rising out of Israel, should rule the world.

Following the Star.

With gladsome steps, and exhilaration of spirits in glorious expectation, the three so-called kings started towards Jerusalem, bearing with them rich presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh, and other costly gifts intended as the first offerings of the Gentile world to the infant Christ. Like the pillar of fire that guided the Israelites, went the star before these men until they had followed it to the Holy City, Jerusalem. Here it seems to have vanished for a while, for on reaching the city they stopped to inquire, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Whether or not they repaired directly to Herod and asked this question we are not informed, but the inquiry was of such a startling nature that Herod was soon apprised of the purpose of the "wise men's" visit. With a fear that might well excite that cruel, crafty and insidious ruler, on whose hands was the blood of brothers, sons, wife and thousands of subjects, and in whose palace were intrigue, plot, sedition and assassination, he hastily summoned the members of the Sanhedrim and asked them for an interpretation of the prophecies respecting the birth of the King. In a few hours all Jerusalem was in a tumult of excitement. The Jews were on tip-toe of joyous expectation, for the first news aroused in them a belief that He who had long been promised to overthrow their oppressors and bring back the ancient glory of Israel, had indeed appeared ; while Herod, jealous, madly ambitious, and fearful of his tottering throne, was mad with evil foreboding and saw in this new King the destruction of his power and a possible punishment for his horrible crimes. After learning from the Sanhedrim that the time of the promised birth was at hand, and that the place of the nativity was Bethlehem, with much craftiness as a vail to hide his intentions, Herod held

an interview with the "Wise Men," at which, with professions of loyalty to his successor, he asked them to proceed at once to Bethlehem and after finding the Child to send him word that he might also come and pay homage to the royal infant.

And the "Wise Men" went out of Jerusalem, when lo, the star again appeared to them, which they followed until it stood over the house in which Mary and Joseph and the Christ-babe were sheltered. I can imagine that their



BAS-RELIEF IN THE CHURCH OF SAINT ANDREA, AT PISTOJA, ITALY, REPRESENTING THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.—Designed by H. Chapins.

joy was so great they did not stop to knock on the door, but shouted their salutations even before they had reached the outer gate. They may have expected to see the Babe housed in a magnificent palace, but it is most probable that they had been forewarned, as were the shepherds, and came directly upon the house which had been prefigured to them in a vision, for God was in their hearts.

Offerings of Rich Gifts.

Reaching at last the room to which they had been miraculously directed, the three kings, or "Wise Men" who might be set high above kings, saw the Holy Mother cradling the infant Messiah in her arms, and with worshipful hearts they fell down before the Babe in adoration while emptying out their treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold, representing the wealth of the East; frankincense, a vegetable resin for sacrificial fumigation, a symbol of purification; and myrrh, an ingredient of the "oil of holy ointment," and which was to be offered to Christ on the cross, mingled with wine, to drown His sufferings. So was it a perfume, to stand as a symbol of His death, by which a world of sin was redeemed through the gift of life eternal.

When the "Wise Men" had made their offerings, instead of returning to Herod, as requested, they were warned by the good angel that had attended them to depart at once for their own country, which they did, having no doubt been divinely informed of Herod's infamous designs.

Traditions of the Three Kings.

The wisdom, charity and worshipful acknowledgment of the Magi have been made the basis of many legends, one of the most beautiful being thus related by Geikie:

"In farthest East lived a people who had a book which bore the name Seth, and in this was written the appearance of the star of the Messiah, and the offerings of gifts to Him. This book was handed down from father to son, generation after generation. Twelve men were chosen who should watch for the star, and when one died another was chosen in his place. These men, in the speech of the land, were called Magi. They went, each year, after the wheat-harvest, to the top of a mountain, which was called the Mountain of Victory. It had a cave in it, and was pleasant by its springs and trees. At last the star appeared, and in it the form of a little CHILD, and over Him the sign of the cross; and the star itself spoke to them, and told them to go to Judea. For two years, which was the time of their journey, the star moved before them, and they wanted neither food nor drink. Gregory of Tours adds that the star sank, at last, into a spring at Bethlehem, where he himself had seen it, and where it still may be seen, but only by pure maidens."

Tradition or legend does not halt at one or two efforts, but seems to gather fresh impulse at each relation, so that the super-pious who thirst for material evidences are afforded satisfaction by the story that the bodies of the three "Wise Men" were discovered somewhere in the East directly after Helena, while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, was miraculously shown the true cross on which Christ suffered. The bodies are said to have been taken to Constantinople, where



NATIVES OF CAPERNAUM. - From Photograph.



 A COMPANY OF PALESTINE GYPSIES.—From Photograph.

they remained for several years and then were transferred to Milan. This latter place was permitted to be the repository of the saintly bones for about three centuries, or until the year 1162, when they were again removed, this time to a cathedral in Cologne, and placed in a magnificent receptacle called "The Shrine of the Three Kings," where they are still on exhibition to all who visit that splendid temple of worship.

Murder of the Innocent Children.

When Herod was informed that the "Wise Men" had departed without observing his request, and had already gone so far on their way towards the East as to be beyond his jurisdiction, he was insanely revengeful, and resolved upon a most desperate measure to destroy the Babe, who it was now currently declared should become the King of Israel. Herod knew himself to be a usurper, raised to the throne chiefly through the influence of Mark Antony, while the priests summoned to interpret the prophecies respecting a Messiah had plainly told him that the BABE was now born who was of the lineage of David, a rightful heir to the throne, and who had come to judge Israel. Having committed so many revolting crimes to retain his crown, Herod was quick to conceive another to rid himself of this new and lawful aspirant. In an earlier chapter I have given a brief account of Herod the Great and of the malady which afflicted his latter years, tormenting him even more than the remorse he suffered for the murder of his beautiful and innocent queen Mariamne. We may therefore consider him now as a tottering old man, seventy-one years of age, whose life was a whited sepulchre, by reason of the plots against him, his bloodthirstiness, his physical infirmities and his threatened dethronement. Although a naturally bad man at heart, and an incarnation of iniquity by practice, he thought to oppose the will of God by issuing an order for the destruction of every male under two years of age that could be found in "Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof." And the order was most cruelly executed according to the letter, none being spared, thus again fulfilling a prophecy spoken by Jeremiah. "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning: Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

Though popular tradition places the number of children slain by Herod's order at thousands, yet considering the sparse population in the immediate district of Bethlehem, it is altogether improbable that more than a score of innocents were slaughtered, and it is still more consistent with the facts and conditions to believe that the number did not exceed a dozen.

Did heart of suffering woman ever break for a greater crime? O Cruelty! thy name is Herod! But the festering and putrid wretch could do no more to innocent childhood. His blood now ran to ichor; his body broke out into a

leprosy of pollution, his eyes were red-shotted, palsy was in his hands, paralysis in his feet, distemper in his foul brain. All Israel was rejoicing at his suffering, and Jerusalem was preparing a festival day against his death. Would no one mourn? No, not one for him; but with the last words of his kingly power he thought to provide mourners by ordering that all the most distinguished heads of the Jewish families of Judea be brought together in the Hippodrome, where exciting games of cruel sport had often entertained him, and on the instant of his death they should be massacred, that Jerusalem might not have a gala day. Happily, when his soul left its foul tenement, his edicts were revocable by the will of the people, and this infamous order was therefore disobeyed.

The Escape into Egypt.

Though many, possibly a score of innocent babes were slaughtered by the cruel order of Herod, the one whose life he specially sought was spared through a providential escape. For Joseph had been warned by God in a dream of the purpose of Herod and commanded to rise immediately and fly with Mary and the Babe to Egypt, where he was to remain until such a time as the danger would be passed.

From the statement of Luke it appears that directly after the three "Wise Men" had poured out their libation of rich presents, and fallen down in adoration of the infant Christ, that as they took their departure for the East, Mary and Joseph set out for Nazareth, which it is made to appear they reached before the warning to flee into Egypt came to Joseph. For Luke says:

"And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth."

But Matthew, who alone records the visit of the Magi and the massacre of the innocents, says:

"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, and take the Young Child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the Young Child to destroy Him.'"

There is however a reconcilement found in the readily understood fact that Matthew tells the entire story, while Luke's account is fragmentary, skipping as he does that portion describing the events which befell Christ from the time of the birth until Mary and Joseph returned to Nazareth after ending their sojourn in Egypt.

On rising from his dream, Joseph must have been filled with fear for the safety of his precious charge, even though his confidence in the protecting care of God was very great. He did not delay following the admonition; certainly he had no need, for poverty may carry its home everywhere the body goes. There were no lands to sell, no cattle to dispose of, no trunks to pack. Only a donkey

to girth up, and a staff to seize. So they set out for a strange country a hundred miles away, probably through Hebron to say good-bye to Zacharias, Elizabeth and the little boy John, down through Beersheba, and across the desert, making straight for the nearest point in Egypt. Tradition says they stopped in or near Heliopolis, "the city of the sun," and a great sycamore tree on the site of the old city is shown at this late day, which it is declared gave shelter to the Holy Family. Others maintain that they took up their abode in Memphis, which was also on the Nile, twenty miles above Heliopolis, but which was destroyed by the Caliph conquerors and the sculptured stone of its magnificent buildings taken to build up Cairo, nearly six hundred and fifty years after Christ.

But while tradition gives us an ample record of the incidents connected with the flight into Egypt, made up chiefly of miraculous occurrences, there is very little reliable information accessible relating either to the flight or the sojourn. Joseph, no doubt, adapted himself to his new situation and took employment among some of the many Jews living in Egypt, following his trade of carpenter, wheelwright, furniture maker, or other kinds of wood-work, for under the designation of "carpenter," all these trades were known.

The Return to Nazareth.

The stay in Egypt could hardly have been pleasant to Joseph and Mary, because of the idolatrous practices of the Egyptians, and because there was a hostile feeling against Jews by the Greeks, large numbers of whom had settled in the Nile region. But it is not probable that they had to remain long in this place of refuge, as it appears, from such history as has been preserved relating to the times, that Herod the Great died within three or four months after ordering a massacre of the infants in and about Bethlehem, and soon thereafter Joseph, by angelic injunction, returned to his own country. His intentions, no doubt, were to settle in Bethlehem, but these were altered by another dream-vision which instructed Him to pass by Jerusalem and proceed to Nazareth.

Upon the death of Herod the Great, his wicked son Archelaus ascended the throne and celebrated his accession by executing three thousand of his subjects in Jerusalem. He was quite as bloody-minded as his father, and equally jealous of his crown, so that he would have gladly destroyed the Infant Christ had it been in his power so to do. It was to avert this possibility that the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream for the third time, and admonished him to avoid the vicinity of Jerusalem and go on to Nazareth and there make his home. Thus, while preserving the Saviour, the prophecy was fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Nothing more is related by the Apostles of the young life of our Lord, until He was twelve years of age, except that "the Child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him."

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST, THE BOY.

ABOUT Christ as a village lad, in and about Nazareth, we have nothing in the canonical books, and yet it is as a boy that we must consider him. There is for the most part a silence more than eighteen centuries long about Christ between infancy and manhood. What kind of a boy was he? Was he a genuine boy at all, or did there settle upon him from the start all the intensities of martyrdom? We have on this subject only a little guessing, a few surmises, and here and there an unimportant "perhaps." Concerning what bounded that boyhood on both sides we have whole libraries of books and whole galleries of canvas and sculpture. Before the infant Christ in Mary's arms, or taking his first sleep in the rough out-house all the painters bow, and we have Paul Veronese's "Holy Family," and Perugino's "Nativity," and Angelico da Fiesole's "Infant Christ," and Rubens' "Adoration of the Magi," and Tintoretto's "Adoration of the Magi," and Chirlandojo's "Adoration of the Magi," and Raphael's "Madonna," and Orcagna's "Madonna," and Murillo's "Madonna," and Madonnas by all the schools of painting in all lights and shades, and with all styles of attractive feature and impressive surroundings, but pen and pencil and chisel have, with few exceptions, passed by Christ, the village lad. Yet by three conjoined evidences, I think we can come to as accurate an idea of what Christ was as a boy as we can of what Christ was as a man.

First, we have the brief Bible account. Then we have the prolonged account of what Christ was at thirty years of age. Now you have only to minify that account somewhat and you find what he was at ten years of age. Temperaments never change. A sanguine temperament never becomes a phlegmatic temperament. A nervous temperament never becomes a lymphatic temperament. Religion changes one's affections and ambitions, but it is the same old temperament acting in a different direction. As Christ had no religious change, He was as a lad what He was as a man, only on not so large a scale. When all tradition, and all art, and all history represent Him as a blonde with golden hair, I know He was in boyhood a blonde.

Apocryphal History of Christ's Boyhood.

We have, besides, an uninspired book that was for the first three or four centuries after Christ's appearance received by many as inspired, and which gives a prolonged account of Christ's boyhood. Some of it may be true; most of it may

be true ; none of it may be true. It may be partly built on facts, or by the passage of the ages some real facts may have been distorted. But because a book is not divinely inspired, we are not therefore to conclude that there are not true things in it. Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico" was not inspired, but we believe it although it may contain mistakes. Macaulay's "History of England" was not inspired, but we believe it, although it may have been marred with many errors. The so-called apocryphal Gospel in which the boyhood of Christ is dwelt upon I do not believe to be divinely inspired, and yet it may present facts worthy of consideration. Because it represents the boy Christ as performing miracles some have overthrown that whole apocryphal book. But what right have you to say that Christ did not perform miracles at ten years of age as well as at thirty? He was in boyhood as certainly divine as in manhood. Then while a lad He must have had the power to work miracles, whether He did or did not work them. When, having reached manhood, Christ turned water into wine, that was said to be the beginning of miracles. But that may mean that it was the beginning of that series of manhood miracles. In a word, I think that the New Testament is only a small transcript of what Jesus did and said. Indeed, John declares positively that if all Christ did and said were written, the world would not contain the books. So we are at liberty to believe or reject those parts of the apocryphal Gospel which say that when the boy Christ with his mother passed a band of thieves, He told his mother that two of them, Dumachus and Titus by name, would be the two thieves who afterwards would expire on crosses beside Him. Was that more wonderful than some of Christ's manhood prophecies? Or the uninspired story that the boy Christ made a fountain spring from the roots of a sycamore tree so that his mother washed his coat in the stream—was that more unbelievable than the manhood miracle that changed common water into a marriage beverage? Or the uninspired story that two sick children were recovered by bathing in the water where Christ had washed? Was that more wonderful than the manhood miracle by which the woman, twelve years a complete invalid, should have been made straight by touching the fringe of Christ's coat? Or the uninspired story that when a mother brought a dead child by the name of Bartholomew to Mary, the mother of Christ, she said: "Do thou place thy son in my Son's bed and cover him with His clothes;" and, so done, the dead child opened his eyes and called with a loud voice for bread. Is that more wonderful than the manhood miracles by which Christ reanimated the dead again and again without going where they were or even seeing them? Why should we disbelieve the apocryphal New Testament when it says that a boy struck the boy Jesus till He cried out, the one who made the assault afterward known as Judas Iscariot, or the story that Christ with other boys made clay figures of birds, and these clay figures took life and flew away? Is that more unbelievable than the Bible account that Adam was made

out of clay and walked forth a man, and afterwards soared an immortal? Not half so much of an undertaking to make a bird out of clay as to make a man out of clay. Or the uninspired story that the boy Christ took the cloths of a dyer's shop and threw them into the fire, and after the dyer's protest and ejaculation, brought forth the cloths in the color that the dyer wished? Is that more unbelievable than the manhood miracle in the wilderness picnic, where five biscuits the size of your fist were turned into enough bread to feed five thousand and the fragments filled twelve baskets? Or the uninspired story that Joseph the father, as a carpenter, having orders to make a throne for the king at Jerusalem, and toiling two years upon it, found that after it was done it was two spans too short, and the boy took hold of one side of the throne and his father the other side of it and pulled it to the right size? Is that any more wonderful than that after growing to manhood he folded up, as easily as you would a fan, a Galilean hurricane? Or the uninspired story that his comrades in their play brought flowers and crowned Him



A YOUNG GIRL OF PALESTINE.—From Photograph.

as a King? I should think they would have done so. Or the uninspired story that a boy hunting for eggs in a partridge nest was stung by a viper and the poisoned lad was brought on a couch to the boy Christ, and Christ asked to be taken with the afflicted child to where the child was bitten, and at Christ's command the serpent with its own mouth drew forth the poison from the wound? Why, Christ has been doing that through all the ages, namely, compelling the very things that wound us, under His sanctifying power, to bring us to health and reinvigoration and eternal life. Or the uninspired story that children were playing on the housetop and the boy Christ was there and one of the children was shoved from the roof and fell to the ground and died, and the other children charged Christ with the misdemeanor, and the boy Christ said: "Charge not me with the crime, but let us leave it to the dead child to settle the controversy," and the boy Christ said: "Zeinumus! Zeinumus! who threw thee down from the housetop?" Then the dead child spake and said: "Not Thou, but such a one did." Was that more wonderful than Paul's resuscitation of Eutychus, who fell from the window while the apostle was preaching? Or the uninspired story in the apocryphal New Testament which says that Christ the boy was taken to school, and Zaccheus, the teacher, told Him the first three letters of the alphabet, whereupon Christ the boy asked his teacher such profound questions concerning the alphabet that the teacher was confounded, and the boy Christ himself explained all to the teacher until Zaccheus said to Joseph, the father of the wondrous boy: "Thou hast brought a boy to me to be taught who is more learned than any master;" then the boy was taken to a more learned master who, angered at the boy's questions, lifted his hand to whip Him, and the hand withered, as will all the hands lifted against Christ? Is that more wonderful than the scene positively recorded by Matthew where the D. D.'s and the LL. D.'s stood around Christ at twelve years of age in the Temple, utterly confounded at his precociousness? Or the story that Christ the boy, questioned by astronomers, told them the number of worlds, their size, their circuits; and, questioned by physicians, told them more about anatomy and physiology than they had ever dreamed of, the number of veins, arteries, nerves and bones? If Christ were divine, was He not able at ten or twelve years to describe the human system as well as though He had been fifty years standing at an operating table or in a dissecting room?

Early Impressions of Christ.

In other words, while I do not believe that any part of the so-called apocryphal New Testament is inspired, I believe much of it is true; just as I believe a thousand books, none of which are divinely inspired. Much of it was just like Christ. Just as certain as the man Christ was the most of the time getting men out of trouble, I think that the boy Christ was most of the time getting boys



NAZARETH, SHOWING IN THE FOREGROUND THE LATIN CONVENT ON THE TRADITIONAL SITE OF MARY'S HOUSE, CHRIST'S BOYHOOD HOME.—From *The Christian Herald.*

out of trouble. He did not sit around moping over what was to be, or what was. From the way in which natural objects enwreathed themselves into His sermons after He had become a man I conclude there was not a rock or a hill or a cavern of a tree for miles around that he was not familiar with in childhood. He had cautiously felt His way down into the caves and had with lithe and agile limb gained a poise on many a high tree top. His boyhood was passed among grand scenery as most all the great natures have passed early life among the mountains. They may live now on the flats, but they passed the receptive days of ladhood among the hills. Our Lord's boyhood was passed in a neighborhood twelve hundred feet above the level of the sea and surrounded by mountains five or six hundred feet still higher. Before it could shine on the village where this boy slept the sun had to climb far enough up to look over hills that held their heads far aloft. From yonder height his eye at one sweep took in the mighty scope of the valleys and with another sweep took in the Mediterranean sea, and you hear the grandeur of the cliffs and the surge of the great waters in His matchless sermonology. One day I see that Divine boy, the wind flurrying His hair over His sun-browned forehead, standing on a hill-top looking off upon Lake Tiberias, on which at one time, according to profane history, were four thousand ships. Authors have taken pains to say that Christ was not affected by these surroundings, and that He from within lived outward and independent of circumstances. So far from that being true, He was the most sensitive being that ever walked the earth, and if a pale invalid's weak finger could not touch His robe without strength going out from Him, these mountains and seas could not have touched His eye without irradiating His entire nature with their magnificence. I warrant that He had mounted and explored all the fifteen hills around Nazareth, among them Hermon, with its crystal coronet of perpetual snow, and Carmel and Tabor and Gilboa, and they all had their sublime echo in after time from the Olivetic pulpit.

Experiences from which He drew His Sublime Illustrations.

And then it was not uncultivated grandeur. These hills carried in their arms or on their backs gardens, groves, orchards, terraces, vineyards, cactus, sycamores. These outbranching foliages did not have to wait for the floods before their silence was broken, for through them and over them and in circles round them and under them were pelicans, were thrushes, were sparrows, were nightingales, were larks, were quails, were blackbirds, were partridges, were bulbuls. Yonder the white flocks of sheep snowed down over the pasture lands. And yonder the brook rehearses to the pebbles its adventures down the rocky shelving. Yonder are the Oriental homes, the housewife with pitcher on the shoulder entering the door, and down the lawn in front children reveling among the flaming flora. And all this spring and song and grass and sunshine and shadow woven into the most exquisite

nature that ever breathed or wept or sung or suffered. Through studying the sky between the hills Christ had noticed the weather signs, and that a crimson sky at night meant dry weather next day, and that a crimson sky in the morning meant wet weather before night. And how beautifully He made use of it in after years as He drove down upon the pestiferous Pharisee and Sadducee by crying out: "When it is evening ye say it will be fair weather, for the sky is red, and in the morning it will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red, and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" By day, as every boy has done, He watched the barnyard fowl at sight of overswinging hawk cluck her chickens under wing, and in after years He said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!" By night He had noticed His mother by the plain candle-light which, as ever and anon it was snuffed and the removed wick put down on the candlestick, beamed brightly through all the family sitting-room as His mother was mending His garments that had been torn during the day's wanderings among the rocks or bushes, and years afterwards it all came out in the simile of the greatest sermon ever preached: "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine." Sometime when His mother in the autumn took out the clothes that had been put away for the summer He noticed how the moth-miller flew out and the coat dropped apart, ruined and useless, and so twenty years after He enjoined: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust can corrupt." His boyhood spent among birds and flowers, they all caroled and bloomed again fifteen years after as He cries out: "Behold the fowls of the air." "Consider the lilies."

A Storm that Swept the Valley.

A great storm one day during Christ's boyhood blackened the heavens and angered the rivers. Perhaps standing in the door of the carpenter's shop He watched it gathering louder and wilder until two cyclones, one sweeping down from Mount Tabor and the other from Mount Carmel, met in the valley of Esdraelon and two houses are caught in the fury, and crash goes the one and triumphant stands the other, and He noticed that one had shifting sand for a foundation and the other an eternal rock for basis; and twenty years after He built the whole scene into a peroration of flood and whirlwind that seized His audience and lifted them into the heights of sublimity with the two great arms of pathos and terror, which sublime words I render, asking you as far as possible to forget that you ever read them before: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew,

and beat upon that house ; and it fell not ; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand ; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.''

Yes ; from the naturalness, the simplicity, the freshness of His parables and similes and metaphors in manhood discourse I know that He had been a boy of the fields and had bathed in the streams and heard the nightingale's call, and



MOUNT HERMON.

broken through the flowery hedge and looked out of the embrasures of the fortress, and drank from the wells and chased the butterflies, which travelers say have always been one of the flitting beauties of that landscape, and talked with the strange people from Damascus and Egypt and Sapphoris and Syria, who in caravans or on foot passed through His neighborhood, the dogs barking at their approach at sundown. As afterward He was a perfect man, in the time of which I write He was a perfect boy, with the spring of a boy's foot, the sparkle of a boy's eye, the rebound of a boy's life and just the opposite of those juveniles who sit around morbid and unelastic, old men at ten.

Christ at the Bench.

But having shown you the divine lad in the fields, I must show you Him in the mechanic's shop. Joseph, His father, died very early, immediately after the famous trip to the Temple, and this lad had not only to support himself but to support His mother, and what that is many of my readers know. There is a royal race of boys on earth now doing the same thing. They wear no crown. They have no purple robe adroop from their shoulders. The plain chair on which they sit is as much unlike a throne as anything you can imagine. But God knows what they are doing and through what sacrifices they go, and through all eternity God will keep paying them for their filial behavior. They shall get full measure of reward, the measure pressed down, shaken together and running over. They have their example in this boy Christ taking care of His mother. He had been taught the carpenter's trade by His father. The boy had done the plainer work at the shop while His father had put on the finishing touches of the work. The boy also cleared away the chips and blocks and shavings. He helped hold the different pieces of work while the father joined them. In our day we have all kinds of mechanics and the work is divided up among them. But to be a carpenter in Christ's boyhood days meant to make plows, yokes, shovels, wagons, tables, chairs, sofas, houses, and almost everything that was made. Fortunate was it that the boy had learned a trade, for, when the head of the family dies, it is a



A CITIZEN OF DAMASCUS AND HIS SONS.

From Photograph.

grand thing to have the child able to take care of himself and help take care of others. Now that Joseph, His father, is dead, and the responsibility of family support comes down on this Boy, I hear from morning to night His hammer pounding, His saw vacillating, His axe descending, His gimlets boring, and standing amid the dust and debris of the shop, I find the perspiration gathering on His temples and notice the fatigue of His arm, and as He stops a moment to rest I see Him panting, His hand on His side, from the exhaustion. Now He goes forth in the morning loaded with implements of work heavier than any modern kit of tools. Under the tropical sun He swelters. Lifting, pulling, adjusting, cleaving, splitting all day long. At nightfall He goes home to the plain supper provided by His mother and sits down too tired to talk. Work! work! work! You cannot tell Christ anything new about blistered hands, or aching ankles, or bruised fingers, or stiff joints, or rising in the morning as tired as when you lay down. While yet a boy He knew it all, He felt it all, He suffered it all. The boy carpenter! The boy wagon maker! The boy house builder! O Christ, we have seen Thee when full-grown in Pilate's police court room, we have seen Thee when full-grown Thou wert assassinated on Golgotha, but, O Christ, let all the weary artisans and mechanics of the earth see Thee while yet undersized and arms not yet muscularized, and with the undeveloped strength of juvenescence trying to take Thy father's place in gaining a livelihood for the family.

Christ Teaching the Doctors.

But, having seen Christ, the boy of the fields and the boy in the mechanic's shop, I show you a more marvelous scene, Christ the smooth-browed lad among the long-bearded, white-haired, high-foreheaded ecclesiastics of the Temple. Hundreds of thousands of strangers had come to Jerusalem to keep a great religious festival. After the hospitable homes were crowded with visitors, the tents were spread all around the city to shelter immense throngs of strangers. It was very easy among the vast throngs coming and going to lose a child. More than two million people have been known to gather at Jerusalem for that national feast. You must not think of those regions as sparsely settled. The ancient historian Josephus says there were in Galilee two hundred cities, the smallest of them containing fifteen thousand people. No wonder that amid the crowds at the time spoken of, Jesus the boy was lost. His parents, knowing that he was mature enough and agile enough to take care of Himself, are on their way home without any anxiety, supposing that their Boy is coming with some of the groups. But after a while they suspect He is lost, and with flushed cheek and a terrorized look they rush this way and that, saying: "Have you seen anything of my boy? He is twelve years of age, of fair complexion and has blue eyes and auburn hair. Have you seen Him since we left the city?" Back they go in hot



CHRIST, AT TWELVE YEARS OLD, IN THE MIDST OF THE DOCTORS, IN THE TEMPLE.

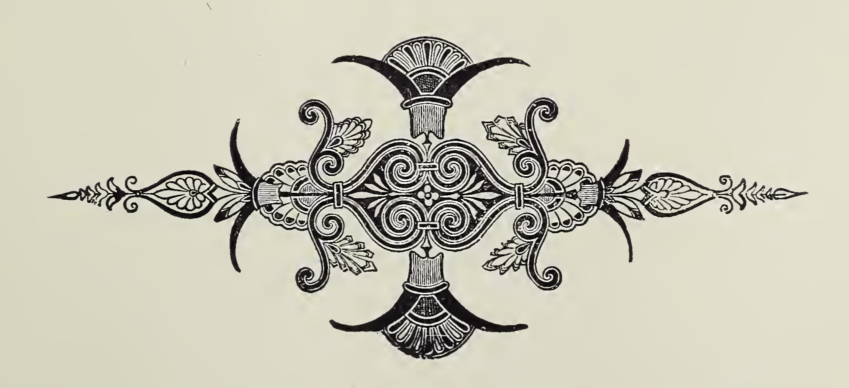
haste, in and out the streets, in and out the private houses and among the surrounding hills. For three days they search and inquire, wondering if He has been trampled under foot of some of the throngs or has ventured on the cliffs or fallen off a precipice. Send through all the streets and lanes of the city and among all the surrounding hills that most dismal sound, "A lost child! A lost child!" And lo, after three days, they discover Him in the great Temple, seated among the mightiest religionists of all the world. The walls of no other building ever looked down on such a scene. A child twelve years old surrounded by septuagenarians, He asking His own questions and answering theirs. Let me introduce you to some of these ecclesiastics. This is the great Rabbi Simeon! This is the venerable Hillel! This is the famous Shammai! These are the sons of the distinguished Betirah. What can this twelve-year Lad teach them, or what questions can He ask worthy their cogitation? Ah, the first time in all their lives these religionists have found their match and more than their match. Though so young, He knew all about that famous Temple, under whose roof they held that most wonderful discussion of all history. He knew the meaning of every altar, of every sacrifice, of every golden candlestick, of every embroidered curtain, of every crumb of shewbread, of every drop of oil in that sacred edifice. He knew all about God. He knew all about man. He knew all about heaven, for He came from it. He knew all about this world, for He made it. He knew all worlds, for they were only the sparkling morning dewdrops on the lawn in front of His heavenly palace. Put these seven Bible words in a wreath of emphasis: "Both hearing them and asking them questions."

The Doctors Confounded.

We are not so much interested in the questions they asked Him as in the questions He asked them. He asked the questions not to get information from the doctors, for He knew it already, but to humble them by showing them the height and depth and length and breadth of their own ignorance. While the radiant Boy thrusts these self-conceited philosophers with the interrogation point, they put the fore-finger of the right hand to the temple as though to start their thoughts into more vigor, and then they would look upward and then they would wrinkle their brows and then by absolute silence or in positive words confess their incapacity to answer the interrogatory. With any one of a hundred questions about theology, about philosophy, about astronomy, about time, about eternity, He may have balked them, disconcerted them, flung them flat. Behold the boy Christ asking questions. He has the right to ask them. It is Christ-like to ask questions. Answer them if you can. Do not say: "I can't be bothered now." It is your place to be bothered with questions. If you are not able to answer, surrender and confess your incapacity, as I have no doubt did Rabbi

Simeon and Hillel and Shammai and the sons of Betirah when that splendid Boy, sitting or standing there, with a garment reaching from neck to ankle and girdled at the waist, put them to their very wit's end. It is no disgrace to say : "I don't know." The learned doctors who environed Christ that day in the Temple did not know or they would not have asked Him any questions. The fact that they did not know sent Kepler and Cuvier and Columbus and Humboldt and Herschel and Morse and Sir William Hamilton and all the other of the world's mightiest natures into their life-long explorations. Telescope and microscope and stethoscope and electric battery and all the scientific apparatus of all the ages are only questions asked at the door of mystery. Behold this Nazarene lad asking questions, giving everlasting dignity to earnest interrogation.

The best thing that Rabbi Simeon and Hillel and Shammai and the sons of Betirah ever did was in the Temple, to bend over the Lad who, first made ruddy of cheek by the breath of the Judean hills, and on His way to the mechanic's shop where He was soon to be the support of His bereaved mother, stopped long enough to grapple with the venerable dialecticians of the Orient, "both hearing them and asking them questions." Many have cried out in admiration of Christ, *Ecce Homo!* Behold the Man! or *Ecce Deus!* Behold the God! but I close this chapter by writing *Ecce Adolescens!* Behold the Boy!



CHAPTER IX.

A VOICE FROM THE WILDERNESS.

IN a previous chapter, the birth of John, surnamed the Baptist, is described, also the prophecy of his appearance as a forerunner to declare and make way for the true Messiah. Beyond the statement that "the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of His showing unto Israel," nothing is recorded concerning his youth, and it is a noticeable coincidence that the Apostolic writers have given almost identical attention to the two infants, Christ and John, apparently regarding the childhood of each as being unworthy of significance beyond the mere prophetic announcement of their respective callings, thus leaving to imagination their boyhood careers, and to tradition the record of their wondrous acts prior to their ministry.

As Joseph passes from our sight after the return to Nazareth, so do Zacharias and Elizabeth disappear from Scripture annals upon the birth of John. There is a painful silence among the sacred historians that makes us pause for explanation. But taking up the broken chain on which the narrative is dependent, examination of its several links discloses some fragments of facts with which to build a half-satisfying connection.

Being the son of a priest, John became also a priest by heirship, and whether his father lived to instruct him, or died leaving him to the care of the priestly college in the Temple, his training must have been the same. Being therefore early brought under the charge of the priesthood he became educated in the law of the prophets at the most impressionable age, and having no doubt heard from the lips of his parents the story of his call to be a forerunner of the Messiah, he became enthusiastically impressed with his mission and sought means to especially prepare himself for it. So he retired into the desert, adopted the life of an ascetic, restricted his diet to wild fruits, to locusts and to wild honey, and applied himself to study.

In the early centuries it was common for men who desired to devote themselves to pious deeds and holy reflection, to retire to desert places, to caves and localities remote from human habitation, where they were least likely to come in contact, or to be seen of other men, and there hold communion with nature and their better aspirations. There are numerous examples of this active and holy life in history, such as Elijah, Jeremiah, and in later years of St. Anthony and Peter the Hermit. In Palestine it was not difficult to find subsistence even in the



AT A FORD OR CROSSING OF THE RIVER JORDAN.—From *The Christian Herald.*

wildest, most remote and sterile districts. The country generally abounded with caves which might serve as excellent shelter, while in the clefts of rocks and trees there were great stores of honey, and in the warm season locusts—similar to our grasshoppers—were very abundant, and an article of common diet, as they are yet in Arabia and in portions of Africa. For clothing, a camel's skin would serve many years, and this might be easily procured, as the people held such cave-dwellers in high repute and were glad to minister to their wants.

So John lived in the wilderness of Judea for a period of many years, having probably left the Temple before the attainment of his majority, to spend his life in meditation and a preparation for the duty of bringing the world to repentance through the Messiah who was to come.

When at length he felt himself ready to undertake this great work, the circumstances were auspicious for declaring his gospel to the people. His long withdrawal from society had served to give him an austere appearance, we must believe, and his self-schooling had resulted in a confidence and hardihood which made him bold in his discourse, so that his speech must have been ablaze with enthusiasm. But more favorable to his purpose was the fear, if not reverent regard, which the people felt for those who practiced austerities and had lived in rigorous asceticism to attain a higher conception of the Deity. Such a one, on emerging from his protracted retirement, was regarded as a most holy man who, having long been in communion with God, was sent as a herald to declare the Divine will. Therefore, the appearance of John, with disheveled hair and only a raiment of camel's hair about his body, held in place by a leathern girdle, barefooted, bare-armed and uncropped beard, must have been almost appalling. And when he spoke with such earnestness, such wisdom, such pious zeal, the people first stopped to gaze, then to wonder, and while wondering they became convicted and converted.

The Spirit that Instructed John.

We must not conclude that John was a misanthrope, or the victim of jealousy, but rather that he was called of God to perform a great duty which only years of preparation could qualify him for. God moves in mysterious ways, and it was through the operation of this singular will that John was influenced to repair to the wilderness, and, as already seen, the wisdom of the purpose is manifest. On his emergence, John was not ignorant of the current events, as we might suppose one to be who had long avoided association with men, but on the other hand he was as well instructed in the affairs of the people, the wrongs under which they suffered, the hypocrisy and debauchery of Herod Antipas, who had succeeded Archelaus, as he was lettered in the law, and he launched his bolts with God-like fearlessness against the corruption of the time, selecting the most prominent targets at which to aim his shafts, at the same time speaking as a

prophet, and with warning voice saying: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

To the people of Judea these words had peculiar significance. During the thirty years that had elapsed since the death of Herod the Great, mighty events had happened of vast import to the Jews. All Judah was a festival when Herod died, but the rejoicing at the taking off of such a monster was for a very short time. Archelaus, his dissolute son, succeeded him, who had hardly come to the throne when an insurrection broke out in Jerusalem that was not put down until three thousand of the rioters were slaughtered. This bloody inauguration of Archelaus' reign occurred during the annual celebration of the Passover and set the people in such a ferment of excitement and mourning that the festival was abandoned, a result which every devout Jew regarded as portentous of some great calamity.



MODERN WOMEN OF PALESTINE.
From Photograph.

The reign of Archelaus, whose rulership as ethnarch was over Judea and Samaria, was terminated after nine years by a complaint preferred against him by his brothers, Antipas and Philip, charging most infamous acts of tyranny, on account of which Augustus banished him to Vienne, in Gaul, where he died. Perhaps Augustus had another motive than the mere punishment of Archelaus, for directly after pronouncing the sentence of banishment against the ethnarch, he attached Judea and Samaria to Syria, and the whole made a Roman province over which governors, called by the Romans *Procurators*, were appointed to rule.

Prior to this act there was a semblance of independence and absolute freedom of religious worship accorded the Jews, but with this extension of Roman authority their civil and ecclesiastical rights were utterly destroyed, even the immemorial hereditary office of High Priest being subordinated and made the creation of the Emperor's pleasure as to appointment and deposition. The office thus became a shuttle-cock, flying from one to another, at the stroke of petty

politicians who could gain the short favor of Augustus. Nor was the procuratorship much less variable, for from the death of Archelaus until the appearance of John the Baptist there were six governors, Pontius Pilate being appointed to the office about four years before the showing forth of John. One of Pilate's first acts was to remove the army headquarters from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, which, of course, brought the standards bearing the image of the Emperor to the Capital city, which was followed by a curious request made by the Jews for a removal of the images. This led to a violent outbreak and threatened slaughter, which was only averted by Pilate yielding to the public demand. But the people, while temporarily appeased, were inflamed by other arbitrary and oppressive orders which rendered them open for revolt, being, in fact, restrained only by the lack of a leader.

This sorry condition of affairs, in connection with the prophecies so well understood, that the time for the promised Deliverer of Israel was now come, and the report that He had actually appeared, inflamed the Jewish population with excited expectation, and when John came preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, the people were ready to hail him as the incarnation of Elias (Elijah) the old prophet, or the Messiah Himself. His appearance was that of a prophet, and his teachings showed remarkable familiarity with the law. When they began to inquire as to his antecedents they found he was of the priestly order, and that his birth had been divinely announced. These facts intensified their enthusiasm, and all of Judea gathered about him to hear his impassioned declarations. As he taught repentance as the first necessary condition for the reception of the Messiah, thousands accepted the faith, confessed their sins and were baptized in the Jordan. The exact form of baptism performed or enjoined by John is not known, especially as it was a rite which seems to have been established by him, and up to this time practiced by no nation or sect. But it was no less readily adopted, whatever the precise form of administration, and thousands accepted it as the seal of their conversion. It may have been a modification of an old obsolete ceremony which the Jews performed upon proselytes from heathenism, but as to this we have no certain authority. It is more probable that the people expected that new forms would be instituted by the Messiah in accordance with the prophecy long before given "that all things should become new."

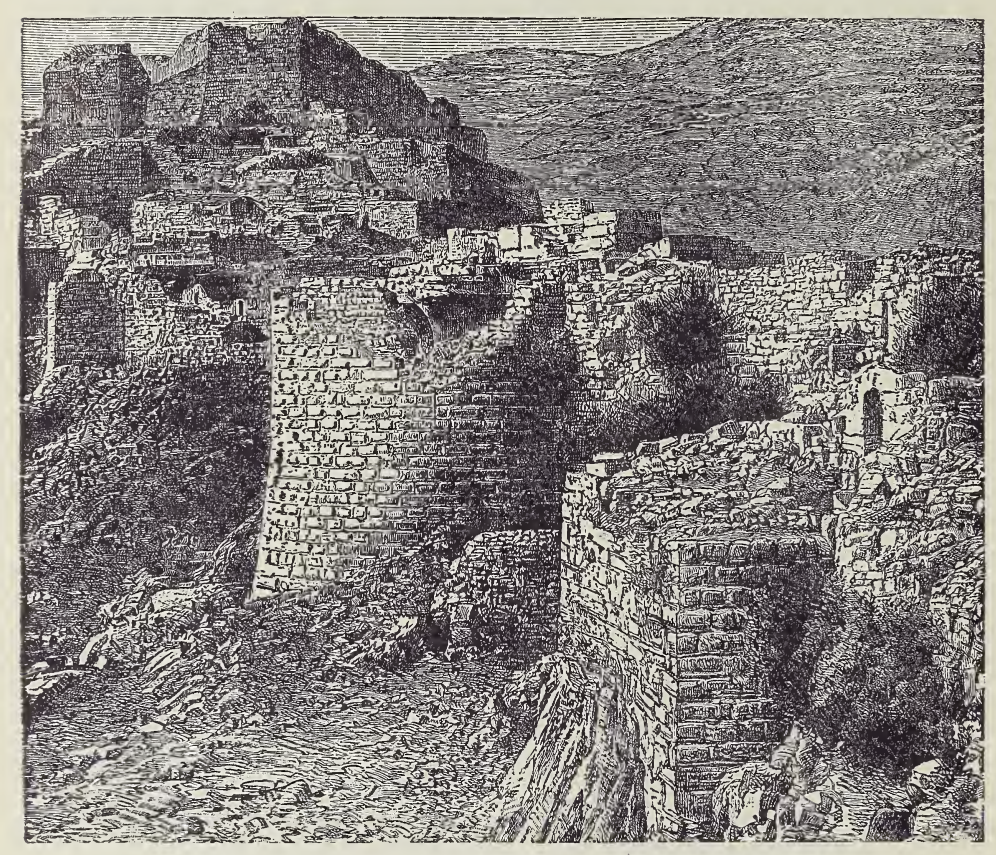
Crystal Gates of the Jordan.

All classes, whether Pharisees or Sadducees, the irreconcilable ritualist and the Samaritan liberal, became alike convicted under John's powerful teachings, and while some caviled and catechised, he gave every one an answer so conclusive that none were able to dispute.



BETHANY.—From *The Christian Herald.*

The thousands whom John led down into the river Jordan for baptism came up not only glorifying God, but were ready to hail him as the expected Messiah. He had the opportunity to establish himself as such in the belief of the people, but disdaining the promptings of such a vain ambition, if he ever felt it, he declared that he was neither Elias nor the Messiah, but that instead he only declared to them One whom they did not yet know, whose superiority was so



RUINS OF ANCIENT FORTIFICATIONS AT CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.

great that he was unworthy even to unloose the thong that bound the sandal to His foot—an office which slaves performed for their masters.

John had probably been preaching to immense crowds and baptizing in the Jordan for a period of six months, before the ONE whom he had come to announce, and for whose presence he had no doubt been anxiously longing, made His appearance before the Baptist. Jesus, now thirty years of age, and therefore

eligible for priestly consecration—had He been of the priestly order—had passed the time appointed for His seclusion, and laying aside the implements of his trade, was ready to go forth upon His ministry. It is difficult to believe that John and Jesus were unacquainted with each other; their relationship as well as the annual Passover and other Jewish festivals which took them to Jerusalem, would certainly bring them together, and each understanding the divine appointment of the other would, except under extraordinary circumstances, or divine purpose, cause them to court the society of one another. Yet from the gospel text we are almost led to believe that they were strangers, whose introduction had been left to God.

Baptism of Jesus.

Thus while John was preaching and baptizing, surrounded by immense congregations, packed so closely together that the identity of a single individual was almost impossible in such a sea of faces, there was one who yet attracted the Baptist's attention. Not by His intrusive manner, His loud babbling, His persistence in crowding His way through to a conspicuous place, His annoying questions or loud shouting. No, by none of these; but by His sweet face, meek manners, quiet deportment, and the graciousness of all His ways, which marked Him as one in whom the grace of God seemed to have its lodging. And when this devout-appearing stranger moved toward the preacher and asked that the ceremony of baptism might be administered to Him, John recognized Him, through inspiration if not acquaintanceship, and before the assembled thousands acknowledged His Messiahship, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" To this, with reverence of manner and meekness of speech, Jesus softly replied:

"Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

Then John and Jesus walked down together beyond the water's edge into the stream that had been the scene of so many miracles, and which had filled so large a space in Jewish history, into the waters that had parted at the lashing of Elijah's girdle, and which separated at the touch of the feet of those who bore the ark, at Joshua's command, towards Jericho; whose bed was the repository of memorial stones, whose ford was a hiding place for Gideon when he rose up to overwhelm the Midianites; into the Jordan, the eastern boundary of the promised land and which has ever since been a symbol of the dividing line between this world and heaven. And when the two were in the waters John gave baptism to our Saviour who, coming up out of the flood, gave voice to prayer; and as He prayed, lo! behold the heavens opened wide to let out an angelic chorus of praise, and down came fluttering on whitest pinions a snowy dove, the type of purity, of innocence, of spiritual blessedness, and rested upon the head of the HOLY ONE. Then from

the violet-banked, and jewel-emblazoned parapets of Paradise swept down the divine acknowledgment and benediction :

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The baptism of Jesus by John had a twofold significance, in that it was a sign of the obedience of Jesus to the law, and to injunctions laid by custom ; His amenability to all the conditions imposed on others seeking a full fellowship with the church. He permitted the ceremony in order to set the seal of His approval of the act as a type not only of conversion, but of regeneration, a prefigurement of His after labor and sacrifices for the world's redemption.

Although thousands must have witnessed the miraculous acknowledgment of His Messiahship, yet the meekness of the God-man, the quiet sweetness of His manners, as opposed to the conception of the Jews, who expected their Deliverer to appear clothed in a majesty terrible to behold and bearing in His hands thunderbolts of vengeance with which to destroy their enemies, prevented them from accepting this manifestation as a conclusive proof of His Messiahship. Nor did Jesus tarry among the crowd to give them further evidence of His divine attributes and holy purposes. But He knew that the preparation for His active ministry was now complete and He only awaited the direction of His father for His showing forth to the people.

The Teachings of John.

John himself does not appear to have had any opportunity for conversing with Jesus after the baptism, nor did he have a spiritual insight into the scheme of salvation—the doctrines which Jesus would employ as a foundation for His teachings. Indeed, in some respects the preaching of John was not apposite to the cause which Christ represented, for John came preaching repentance only and not regeneration. His gospel was love, and yet it is strongly impregnated with the intolerance felt by all ancients for their enemies. Exclamations such as "O, ye generation of vipers!" "He shall baptize you with fire!" and other like wrathful expressions, are indicative of a nature that is not wholly purged of hatred towards enemies, and is the immediate opposite to that of Christ. Again, it would appear that in the hour of his affliction, when in the great gloomy castle prison of Machærus, John seems to have doubted the Messiahship of Jesus, for Matthew tells us that he sent two disciples to put to our Lord the question : "Art thou He that should come? or look we for another?"

And yet on the other hand John preached a boundless love, and a charity which almost passeth understanding : "He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat let him do likewise. Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely ; and be content with your wages, nor exact any more than that which is promised you." His self-abnegation is no less



THE TEMPLE COURT AT JERUSALEM.

conspicuous, and his whole life is a type of perfect manhood. In the early part of his ministry he appears to have perceived only the shadow of a spiritual existence; nowhere did he preach that repentance brought a heavenly reward, being in the clouds of half-material, half spiritual belief respecting the destiny of the race, like his forefathers, the rabbis, as well as the common people: catching a most uncertain perception of the hereafter, just enough to keep him confused, yet sufficient to preserve him from materialism. But in his testimony to the Messiahship we discover a light breaking through the vail that concealed from him a knowledge of the glorious condition of the blessed beyond the grave, for he said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on Him."

A Crowned Villain Denounced.

After the baptism of Jesus, He was ready to enter upon an active ministry, and departed from John to undergo His first trials on the mountain of Quarantana, as will be presently described. But John continued his exhortations in Galilee, both preaching and baptizing. So great was the excitement which he created that even Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, went out to hear him, and became so favorably influenced that he was upon the point of acknowledging conviction, and doubtless would even have been baptized but for John's bold denunciation of the tetrarch's crimes. Herod had gained some popularity with his subjects by reason of several liberal acts that had distinguished the early part of his administration, but he lost whatever good opinion that had thus been formed by a most impolitic as well as criminal act. He had married the daughter of Aretas, King of Arabia Petræa, but soon tiring of her, and yet without procuring a divorcement, he made overtures of marriage to Herodias, the wife of his half-brother, Herod Philip, who had been excluded from any share in the possessions of Herod the Great, his father. But Herodias had lived several years as wife to Herod Philip, by whom she had a daughter named Salome. Both mother and daughter were ambitious, and thought no act too monstrous if by it they might rise to power. Hence, as Herod Philip was not above a private station, the overtures of the tetrarch were received with favor, and an infamous alliance was accordingly formed between the false wife and her paramour, Herod Antipas. This brazen, shameless, outrageous cohabitation, as well as base wrong thus done to Herod Phillp, highly incensed the Jews, and the circumstance coming to the knowledge of John, he denounced with characteristic vehemence the crime of the tetrarch. This exposure in public speech so incensed Herod that he ordered John to be seized and cast into the fortress prison at Machærus, in Peræa, but probably with no intention of punishing him with death, for within himself he could not but admire John, and no doubt accepted his

teachings as divinely inspired. It may be, however, that Pilate, who was always full of misgivings and utterly without moral courage, had become alarmed at the influence of John, seeing that he was violently assailing the corruption of the rulers and had an immense following, presumably ready to do his bidding, and prevailed on Herod to place the Baptist under restraint, or to order his execution, if there were signs of revolt or resistance shown at his arrest. But whatever may have been the promptings or the secret intentions, Herod saw proper to remove John far distant from the scene of his labors and to incarcerate him in the strongest and best defended fortress within the limits of his domains.



SALOME RECEIVING THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.—From the Painting by Bernardino Luini.

But before John was taken from the region in which he had won so large a following, though many of his disciples still continued to preach the doctrines which he promulgated, the crowds gradually lessened and soon went over to Jesus, who was now performing wondrous works along the shores of Lake Tiberias, and whose footsteps were being followed by vast multitudes. Some of the disciples of John, who, perhaps, had not heard Jesus, or who did not comprehend His true nature, bearing some jealousy because of His success, came to John at Enon, complaining of the greater influence of Jesus; but instead of sharing their jealousy, as a worldling would have done, the nobility of his nature is again manifested in another acknowledgment of the infinite greatness of Christ. Therefore, not sorrowfully, not regretfully, but joyfully, he tells his disciples, "He [Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease."

The righteous Baptist was kept in prison for several months, during which time he was occasionally brought before Antipas and his friends to be made sport of, and Christ apparently intimates in the words, "They did to him whatsoever they pleased," that he was subjected to some manner of torture, as was Samson; but John, like Paul, maintained his composure under all indignities, and so deported himself that he finally won from Herod an admiration for his greatness and nobility, which found manifestation in a grant of many liberties not

usually permitted to prisoners. He was allowed to receive his friends and even to instruct those who came to listen to his words of wisdom.

The Dance of Death.

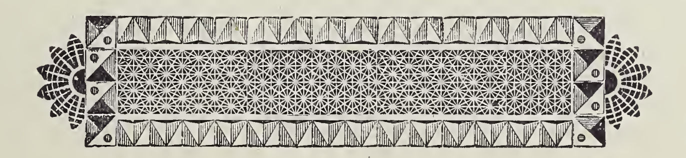
Perceiving how Herod Antipas was becoming gradually more friendly towards John, and seeing also how highly he was regarded by the high priest at Jerusalem, Herodias, first stung to anger by John's reproof of the tetrarch, resolved now to bring about his execution, and she began, not openly, but covertly, to poison Herod's mind against the Baptist. Her infamous efforts were the more powerful now because of a war which Aretas, father of the repudiated wife, threatened against Herod to punish him for the shameful abandonment of his daughter, whose position as wife to the tetrarch had been usurped by the adulterous Herodias.

Though baffled for a time, the opportunity came at last for Herodias to glut her revenge on the holy man who had been her accuser. Herod Antipas had now occupied the throne for a period of about thirty years, and as it had been his custom to celebrate each anniversary, he assembled his court officers and a large number of his friends for the annual festival commemorative of his accession to the tetrarchy. It was a royally grand occasion : the palace of Tiberias was aflame with splendid illumination ; flowers—for it was summer time—hung from the windows in such profusion as fairly to embower the great and magnificent building ; birds flung their songs from out golden cages through the courts and down the corridors and over the tables spread with every conceivable luxury. Musicians, concealed under the shades of rare plants, poured out rich melodies, while unbridled men, sheiks from Arabia, captains from the guards, generals from Rome, lords from the court, and rich men from every part of Galilee, gathered before the bounteous board to drink wine to the health and long life of the lecherous tetrarch.

Herodias was not present, for women were not generally admitted to such festivities, but she sent her daughter Salome, who was brazen enough to violate custom and claim the right of a princess to appear before Herod on any occasion. The feast was ended and the wine was so far drunk that an orgy was now to be inaugurated. It was a festival like that which Ahasuerus prepared to introduce the unveiled Vashti to his ignoble friends. So, in came Salome with only such raiments as served to show her form most perfectly, and gracefully tripping before Herod, with obeisance to him and then the guests, began to dance in wild, lascivious motions that were particularly pleasing to the half-drunken assemblage. It was a ballet in which the dancer told a mythological story by pantomime of feet and arms, and so skillfully did she act her part that the revelers were mad with applause and approbation. But the most pleased of all was Herod himself,

who, to express his delight, in maudlin munificence offered to present her whatsoever she might ask, even to the half of his kingdom. What generosity! Why, could she make a prompt selection when there were so many things appealing to her cupidity? So she smiled and passed out to confer with her infamous mother, the Jezebel of the period. Herodias did not have long to meditate, she had now but one desire—revenge. She therefore advised: "Go back quickly and ask the head of John the Baptist." The daughter knew no ambition different from that of her mother, and her soul was burdened with no less guilt, and her heart was as vile. So she hastened back to Herod and made her bloody request. Half-drunken and vainglorious, yet the tetrarch shuddered and turned pale before the tigress that had trapped him. Alarm took the place of joy. Could a king violate his promise before a lordly company? What is moral courage to a king? Why, only a matter to be talked about when the sky is clear. The titled, the rich, the dignified though besotted guests had heard his offer, therefore must his so-called honor be kept for an hour, even if the price of it be reprobation, obloquy, contumely and objurgation for all time and the curse of God through eternity. But the evil in him triumphed, and calling a soldier to his side he whispered in his ear an order to bring to him the head of the holy man.

When the messenger of death came to his prison cell, John was ready for him; his whole life had been one of preparation for the summons, and death could not be to him any other than a welcome visitor. And he bowed himself to the sword of the executioner, but his spirit soared away to a freedom never before enjoyed, and to home which since childhood he had never known. And soon after receiving the order, the guard returned to Herod bearing the bleeding head of the last great prophet, which was handed to Salome on a salver, who in turn carried it to her polluted mother. Did this monstrous crime go unpunished? No; God never forgets such offences against nature. Herod lived on a few years to be haunted by the memory of his atrocious act, but his kingdom was taken from him and incorporated with Syria, and at length both Herod and Herodias went down together in a common ruin, ending their miserable lives in banishment at Lugdunum, A. D. 39. Salome left the country at once and went to her aged husband, Philip, the tetrarch of Trachonitis, who, dying soon after, she again married, the second time to Aristobulus, King of Chalcis. History is silent as to her after life, but that it was one of great bitterness and wretchedness we may well believe.



CHAPTER X.

JESUS ASSAULTED BY SATAN.

DIRECTLY after the baptism of Jesus, doubtless immediately after, He was commanded by the SPIRIT to repair to the wilderness. Matthew says: "Then was Jesus *led* up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Mark says: "And immediately the Spirit *driveth* Him into the wilderness; and He was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts." Luke says: "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was *led* by the Spirit into the wilderness."

Though using different expressions, we may regard the testimony of the three gospel writers as the same, the employment of the word *drove* instead of *led* being illustrative of Mark's greater enthusiasm and forcibleness of statement.

As Moses and Elijah each spent forty days in fasting, as a preparatory act for their prophetic office, so Jesus went into the wilderness for a like period and under like conditions to bring Himself into a communion with His heavenly Father. If John did not pass any time in famishment, he practiced other forms of self-denial in the waste regions of Judea, as many other prophets had done before him, so that it may have been to conform to the early experiences of the distinguished prophets of Israel that Jesus was led into the wilderness to undergo not only a fasting of forty days but the assaults of Satan also. Having been sent to the world in form incarnate, He must be subjected to all the harsh experiences of life in order that He might be an example before the world, that our understanding of His sacrifices might be perfect, and our appreciation of His sufferings thorough. Thus it was, for a twofold purpose, that Jesus came up out of the Jordan waters with the sign of the Messiahship upon Him, and repaired to the wilderness to devote a period to prayer and pious meditation, an act which He repeated many times afterwards, when accumulations of trouble became too heavy for Him to bear.

What lonely, desolate, bleak wastes of beetling rocks, shelving precipices, gloomy caverns, and dreary deserts, distinguish some of the hills and mountains near the Jordan! Nothing green except a sparse growth of chaparral on the mountain sides, while the peaks are hoary with limestone scoured by pelting storms, and the valleys, parched nearly all the seasons, are strewn with sands that quiver under a torrid sun. There was shade in the many caves, but it was the shade of gloom, of terror, of inexpressible melancholy, whose oppressive silence



JESUS IN THE WILDERNESS TEMPTED BY SATAN.

was broken by no other sounds than the flutter of bat, the growl of leopard, the laugh of hyena or the roar of lion. Night pillowed her head in the valley, and day woke in dread on the mountain. And here in this barren solitude tarried Jesus, with the divine light hallowing and illuminating His surroundings, with the joy of holy companionship filling His heart, and comforting assurances from His Father raising His soul. The days must have flown by in rapid succession, for time escapes on nimble wings with those reveling in a rare delight. And the ecstatic pleasure of sweet communion with God must have made Jesus forgetful of all other things, until exhausted nature came knocking at the temple of His weakened energies, to admonish Him of the need of a renewed vitality. And at the end of forty days He was ahungered.

The Temptation.

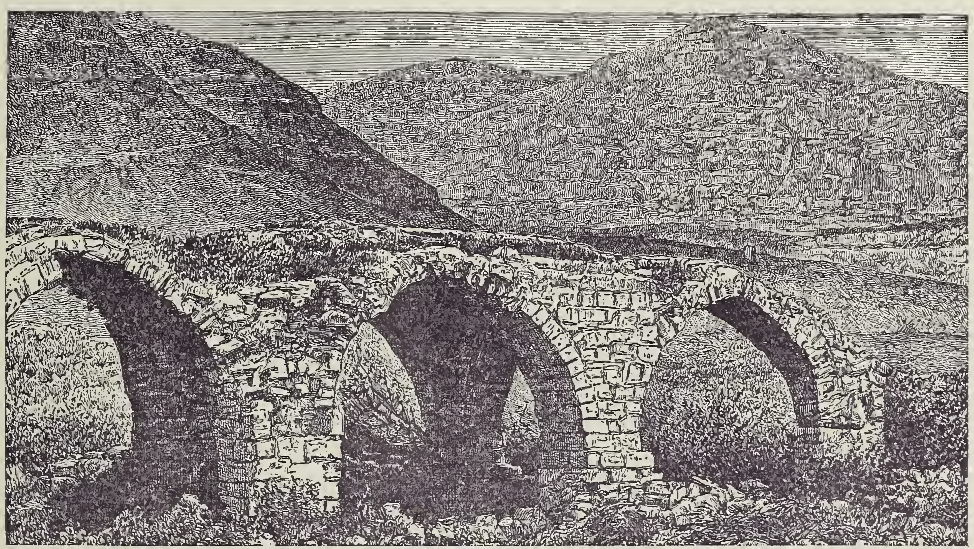
Feeble, faint, completely enervated by His long fasting, and doubly unstrengthened by a sudden relaxation following the awakening from His spiritual, to a realization of His material surroundings, He was in a condition when the mind is least capable of resistance to temptation. And now came Satan, with smooth speech and persuasive tongue, to deceive and to bribe our Lord. His suave insinuation even in the most repulsive guise had won the confidence of Eve, and remembering that God had promised that the SON of a woman should bruise the serpent's head, he felt his opportunity was now come to again thwart the will of the Almighty. What form he assumed we know not, but recognizing Jesus as the true Son of God, and knowing the purpose of His ministry, Satan must have taken an angelic shape, since he used scriptural texts as his arguments.

Seeing Jesus faint with hunger, he said: "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread." But nearly famished as He was, Jesus saw that the request was made only to test Him, or to tempt Him, and He therefore quick replied, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Or in other words, material food is no more important to the body than is spiritual food to the soul. Thus Satan's appeal to the physical necessities which oppressed Jesus was met by a prompt denial of desire through the fullness of a grace that lifts the soul above bodily needs.

Being thus repulsed in his first attack, Satan thought next to make an appeal to Christ's vanity, so taking Him to a pinnacle of the Temple the wily adversary offered a second temptation by saying, "If thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down from hence, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up." Or, to use modern phraseology, "Now, if you are really the Son of God, which many must doubt, give an exhibition of your power, by leaping from this great height and floating, like bird on folding wing, to the ground, alighting harmless before the priests, the

rulers and concourse of people below, you can at once demonstrate your divinity, and your claims to the Messiahship will be acknowledged.''

But again Jesus rebukes the tempter, by saying, ''Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'' Christ was commissioned to perform a certain work through preordained means which involved great personal sacrifices, hence He would not attempt to anticipate the will of the Father who sent Him, or evade any requirement or condition that God had imposed. Christ was not only to be made a sacrifice, but a teacher also, and the time had therefore not yet come for an exhibition of His divine power, even if desire to manifest Himself to the people in such an ostentatious manner had been really entertained. And so the second temptation



MOUNTAIN OF QUARANTANA, WHERE THE TEMPTATION IS SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE.

was overcome through the same spiritual insight, aside from divine agency, that enabled Jesus to resist Satan's first appeal.

The Vision on Quarantana.

Not yet discouraged, however, but with characteristic persistence, the devil for a third time assaults the citadel of the Holy One. Hunger and vanity might be resisted, though both are great temptations which may only be overcome by the power of a righteous conscience; but will a promise to gratify all worldly ambition be refused so easily? Satan is determined to see. So he took Jesus to the top of a very high mountain, so lofty that from its apex he might look down upon all the kingdoms of the world; upon the palaces and splendors that lay eastward and westward, and southward and northward; upon the crowns that circled

the brows of every king, and the fleets that sailed on every sea, and the wealth that was garnered in every treasury, and the power and aggrandizement of every nation, and all this aggregation of splendor, of riches, of authority, of supreme sovereignty, Satan offered to give to Jesus if He would but renounce God, if He would fall down in worshipful feeling before the Prince of Darkness. It was an offer of compromise ; a bribe intended to buy Christ from executing the commission for which He had been sent into the world.

As there is no mountain so high as to afford a view of any considerable part of the world, and notwithstanding that the peak of Quarantana is pointed out as the lofty spot where this temptation occurred, we must still regard the incident either in a figurative sense, or that Satan was able to conjure up a vision, before the sight of Jesus, of all the world's principalities. From the apex of Quarantana may be viewed a long stretch of the Jordan and its sinuous valley, while breaking the horizon beyond lies a range of mountains, and between, the Judean wilderness, the glistening Dead Sea and Mount of Olives, but above all of this, rising like a mirage, might have been a glorious vision of the world's possessions, like John's apocalyptic view of the celestial city, or Elijah's perception of the heavenly cohort.

But whatever may have been the circumstances, whether material or spiritual, whether ocular or illusory, the lesson is no less striking for its grandness of illustration. True it is, that Satan had no ownership in any of these things which he offered to bestow, while Christ, as joint-heir of God and hence the Creator, was master of all, and to whom every creature is answerable, and who are only tenants of His domain. But the temptation was a sufferance of God, similar to that to which Job was subjected, and was permitted as a lesson to the world illustrative of the temporary subjection of Jesus to the conditions and limitations which surround all men, and of His holiness not as the Son of God, but the Son of Man. Therefore, as the Son of Man He answered : "Get thee Hence, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

"It is written," is the Lord's introduction to every rebuttal of His to the wily suggestions of the tempter, Satan. He enters into no argument or parley of any kind, but fights the adversary with the divine weapon which St. Paul recommends to all saints, when he warns them to put on the whole armor of God, and that is, the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Understanding the futility of further effort to allure Jesus from the way of righteousness, the arch adversary spread his wings and departed, leaving his triumphant enemy on the mountain top, to whom angels now came flocking down to pay their homage in songs of victory and praise.

Jesus Returns to John.

After forty days of hunger and temptation Jesus was ministered to by angels and then He left the mountain peak and went to Bethabara, an ancient

ford on the Jordan—though John says it was beyond the Jordan—where the Baptist was preaching. At the time of His visit to the place there was a delegation of priests and Levites, sent probably by the Sanhedrim, who had just arrived to propound certain questions to John as to who he was and by whose authority he was preaching and baptizing. The claim had been set up by many that he was indeed the Christ long promised, and by others that he was Elias (Elijah), while yet others rejected him as nothing more than an enthusiast. But the general opinion was so favorable that he might have declared himself the Messiah without meeting a violent opposition. But John denied being either Christ or Elijah, claiming no pre-eminence whatever above the humblest, and declaring himself to be only an instrument, "the plow that goes before the sower," the crier that precedes the royal coming, the courier of announcement. And when the Pharisees of the delegation asked him why then did he baptize, he answered them thus: "I baptize with water, but (recognizing Christ among the multitude) there standeth one among you whom ye know not, He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe latchet I am unworthy to unloose." This answer was a declaration that the ceremony of baptism as performed by him was but a rite of consecration to a holy service, an acknowledgment of sin, and a preparation for an acceptance of Him who had been sent as a Saviour for the world, and for the regeneration of Israel.

What effect John's answers had on the messengers sent by the Sanhedrim we know not, but as Christ was not revealed to them it is most seemly to believe that they either failed to comprehend John's words, or else left him feeling that he was but a visionary man whose mind was distracted by delusions.

On the following day, seeing Jesus approach, John hailed Him as the Son of God, and to his followers he said: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and so particularized Him to the crowd both by description and giving testimony to the seal of Holiness which he had witnessed set upon Jesus at His baptism, that thereafter His identification as the Messiah of John's pronouncement was unmistakable. At this point the active ministry of Jesus begins.

The First Disciples.

From the language of the text John's acknowledgment and identification of Christ seems to have been addressed to but two of his disciples, but we would rather believe, by the knowledge we have of John's character, that the declaration was made to all those who stood about him and to whom he was preaching with such power and goodly effect.

But at the side of John were two of his particular friends, or early converts, who had left their fishing nets to hear the words of warning that John was uttering to such great crowds. One of these was named Andrew, a brother of

Simon Peter, who will be mentioned frequently hereafter, and the other, though not mentioned by name, was probably John, a son of Zebedee. As Jesus came up to them they inquired with much anxiety His place of residence, to which He made no other answer than a request for them to "come and see." And so the two followed Him to His temporary abode and were under the witchery of His magic voice, and the charm of His infinite love, and the magnetism of His gracious presence for a space of two hours. What the subject of their conversation was we may surmise by the results which immediately followed. Andrew left his newly-found Master only to hurry off and find his brother, Peter, who was still with the Baptist at Bethabara. The search was an anxious one, for the crowd was great, but Andrew at last catches sight of him and rushing up with bursting joy, he cries out, "Brother, brother, we have found the Messiah." And he brought Peter to Jesus, who received him to fellowship, but gave him a new name, Cephas—a stone,—because he became as firm and unyielding in righteousness as a rock.

The Doubts of Nathanael.

John, the beloved disciple, and Andrew and Simon Peter, were so soulfully delighted, and so filled with worshipful reverence for Jesus that as He journeyed back to Galilee they followed Him, holding sweet converse on the way and becoming enlightened as to the divine character and holy purpose of the Messiah; and as they traveled along the highway they met a friend of Andrew and Peter, a fisherman of Bethsaida, named Philip, who being called, joined the party and became an accepted disciple. Philip was likewise so impressed with the Godly attributes of the Divine Master that coming upon a friend named Nathanael, who was sitting beneath a fig tree that stood by the wayside, or possibly before his house in Cana, he besought him also to join them, telling him of the power, the glory and the grace of Jesus, who he assured him was the promised Messiah. Nathanael not only doubted the claim made by Philip, but was even inclined to cast a slur upon the holy Nazarene, for, said he, in reply, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" But to this Philip only answered, "Come and see." There was something, either in the appearance of Christ, or a curiosity to discover the cause of Philip's infatuation with the stranger, that prompted Nathanael to accept Philip's invitation, and as he approached, Jesus said to those that were with Him, "Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile." Probably Nathanael (surnamed Bartholomew) overheard the expression, or else Jesus accosted him by name, which so surprised him that he asked, "Whence knowest Thou me?" Then did Jesus answer him in such manner that Nathanael acknowledged Him as the Son of God, and the King of Israel, and thenceforward served as a faithful disciple, though the gospel record thereafter refers to him



never as Nathanael, but as Bartholomew, who was afterwards a preacher of the Christian doctrine in Arabia Felix, long after the death of His Master.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST IN CANA.

IF the hard brow ever relaxes, it is at the wedding. The nature cold and unsympathetic thaws out under the glow, and the tears start as we hear the bride's dress rustling down the stairs, and the company stand back, and we hear in the timid "I will" of the twain, the sound of a lifetime's hopes, and joys, and sorrows. We look steadily at them, but thrice at her to once at him, and say, "God bless her, how well she looks!"

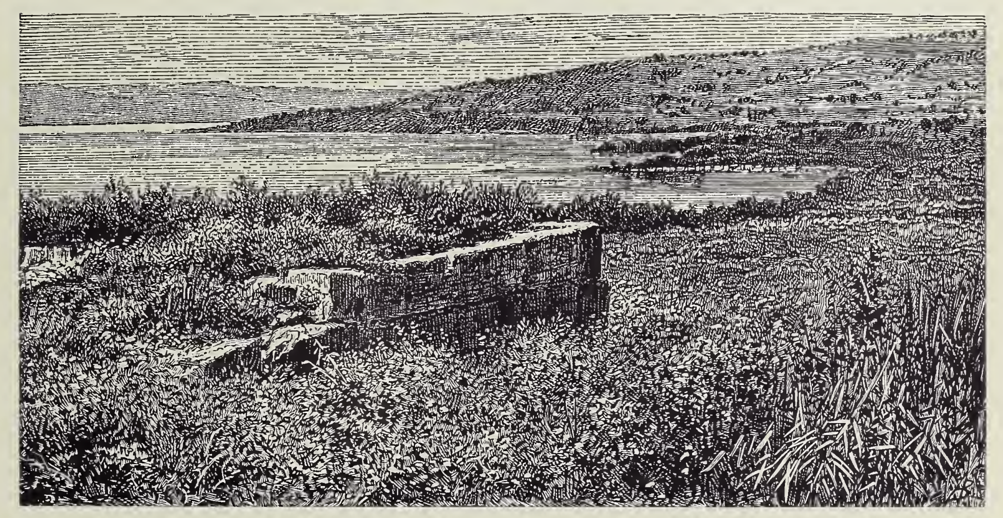
We cry at weddings, but not bitter tears; for when the heart is stirred, and smiles are insipid and laughter is tame, the heart writes out its joy on the cheek in letters of crystal. Put on the ring! Let it be ever bright, and the round finger it encloses never be shrunken by sorrow. May the twain grow old together, helping each other on in the path of life; and coming up to the marble pillar of the grave and parting, one going this side, and the other going that, may they meet again just beyond it, to find that the marble pillar was only the door-post of Heaven. When the wedding is done, and the carriage rolls to the door, and the trunks are heaved to their places, and the door goes shut with a bang, and the driver gathers up the reins, we all come out on the steps and give them three times three for a good starting.

We come in this chapter to a wedding. It is in common life. No carriages roll to the door, no costly dress rustles on the carpet, no diamond head-gear, but a marriage in common life—two plain people have pledged each other, hand and heart, and their friends have come in for congratulations. The joy is not the less because there is no pretension. In each other they find all the future they want. The daisy in the cup on the table may mean as much as a score of artistic garlands fresh from the hot-house. When a daughter goes off from home with nothing but a plain father's blessing and a plain mother's love, she is missed as much as though she were a princess. It seems hard, after the parents have sheltered her for eighteen years, that in a few short months her affections should have been carried off by another; but mother remembers how it was in her own case when she was young, and so she braces up until the wedding has passed, and the banqueters are gone, and then she has a good cry all alone.

The Marriage Festival.

The first wedding that Christ ever attended was at the place where He performed the first miracle recorded by the Apostles. It was at Cana, the home

of Nathanael, a little town that nestled upon a hill rising from the verdant plain of El Battauf, not far from Nazareth, and in which we may believe some of the relatives of Christ lived. A wedding in that village was not less notable because the place was small, for occasions of this kind were always festival among the Jews, and were largely attended. The ceremonies invariably began as the day was closing, and were conducted not with solemn observance but with merry-making and gleefulness befitting the most joyous occasion in the life of a young couple. Friends from afar, as well as near, came to join in the marriage festival, and feasting was kept up for an entire week, when poverty did not forbid. There was a profusion of flowers, in the spring time, scattered about and through the house of celebration, and children were befrocked in their brightest clothes,



RUINS OF CAPERNAUM AND VIEW OF A PORTION OF LAKE TIBERIAS.

making up a procession that marched behind torches borne by the older ones, singing songs, striking tabrets, and playing pipes, while long into the night there were sounds of melody that imparted motion to dancing feet.

Jesus and His five disciples had probably received an invitation directly on their arrival in Nazareth, and with Mary they walked the four miles between Nazareth and Cana, to be present at the wedding and to join in the pleasures which the event afforded. It was the custom to provide quantities of wine as well as of provisions with which to regale the attending company ; but on this occasion the number of persons present was so great that shortly after the festivities were begun it was discovered the supply of wine was inadequate for the occasion. Mary was a confidant member of the household, if not a relative, and to

her therefore the news was first imparted of the insufficiency, and she immediately called Jesus aside and informed Him of the embarrassing situation. Whether her purpose in thus notifying Him was with the expectation that He would hasten off to some neighboring village to procure an additional supply, or that He would work a miracle in the presence of the guests, we know not, nor have we reason for surmise ; but whatever were her expectations the results were surprising in the extreme. Before the door of the house stood six large stone jars, filled with water, which was used by the guests for washing their hands and faces upon their arrival, as was the invariable custom among the Jews, as an act not only of cleanliness, but of purification also. By Christ's instructions these jars were emptied and then taken to a neighboring fountain and filled anew with fresh water. When this was done, the jars with their limpid contents, were returned to the house, and out of these Jesus then commanded the servants to fill a goblet and bear it to the governor of the feast. When the chairman of the banquet had tasted the offering he found that instead of water it was wine of the rarest vintage, a wine so superexcellent that he called the bridegroom to his side and said, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk then that which is worse ; but thou hast kept the good wine until now." Wondrous miracle ; more than one hundred gallons of water blushed into purest wine at the word of Jesus ! Taste of every jar, it is all the same ; drink of every goblet, the sparkle is in each ; look upon every drop, the rose's flush, the diamond bead, the bloom of health is present in all. Analyze any part and there will be found neither adulteration nor fermentation, only the pure blood of the grape, before contamination touched it with polluted fingers ; before it caught the poison of decomposition from attainted air ; before the vinous, the acetous, the viscous, the putrefactive agencies had destroyed the healthful and undefiled juices of a fruit which is so often mentioned in Scriptures as to be almost consecrated to holy uses. Pure water had been converted into pure wine ; or, as a distinguished essayist once wrote, with a succinctness that appears like inspiration, "The conscious water knew its God and blushed."

By the Sea of Galilee.

After the marriage in Cana, Jesus, accompanied by His mother and disciples, went to Capernaum, not many miles away, where he made His home for a short time, and which vicinity became the scene of many of His most important labors. This city, only the ruins of which now remain, was admirably situated on the west shore of Lake Tiberias—the Sea of Galilee and Gennesaret, as it is also called. The place was of considerable importance in the time of Christ, owing to the fact that being on the borders of the territory of Philip and Antipas it was well garrisoned and had a large custom house where duties were collected by officers of the two governments. Besides these, there was a splendid synagogue of white

lime-stone in the town, to which a great many Jews from the surrounding region repaired for worship, while a highway led from Acre, formerly Ptolemais, through Capernaum to Damascus, which brought a large number of travelers and merchants to the place, though the permanent population consisted chiefly of fisher-



PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE ROAD TO ASKELON, NEAR JERUSALEM.

men. Capernaum and Bethsaida were only about two miles apart, to which fact must be credited the statement that the disciples John, Andrew and Peter were inhabitants of the latter place, but it is more probable their dwellings were in Capernaum, as was that of James, and of Peter certainly.

Attends the Passover at Jerusalem.

Jesus did not remain long in Capernaum on the visit which He first made there with His disciples, for as the Passover was near at hand He determined to go on to Jerusalem, where His ministry would have an extended field, and which He was now ready to declare to the people who would gather there for religious instruction and observance. April had come, with its freshness of flowers and blooming trees, when the green earth looked like an emerald spreading away to the horizon, or a carpet just unrolled before the coming of a royal train. The pulse of rejuvenated nature was quickened with preparations for a festival season, and men's hearts were lifting up to praise under the inspiration of spring's approaching footsteps. All Palestine was looking towards Jerusalem, the Mecca of devout Jews. The roads soon became dusty under trampling feet, great armies of pilgrims had taken up the march for the Holy City, the poor afoot, the rich on camels, merchants driving before them flocks of sheep and herds of goats and cattle, which would find a ready market in Jerusalem. See the caravans as they come winding their way from Damascus on the north across Hermon, and down the Jordan valley ; and from Arabia Petræa on the south, up through the hill country of Judea ; and from Cæsarea, Ptolemais and the coast cities of the west, and from the far eastern district watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates, and from the land of Moab and of Ammon ; dozens, scores, hundreds, thousands, on foot and by every means of conveyance, while beggars and decrepit men and women line the way, asking alms or dragging themselves along, but with eyes ever set towards Jerusalem. And among the crowds of dust-covered, dirt-stained, weary-limbed and athirsted pilgrims may be seen Jesus and His disciples, trudging along like the poor men that they were, but all the more anxious to reach Jerusalem in time to participate in the feast of the Passover, which was celebrated in the spring time, and was the most joyous of all Jewish festivals, commemorating as it did the plague which led to the freedom of the Jews from their bondage to the Egyptians.

The vast crowds here assembling poured through the five gates of Jerusalem with ceaseless flow for days before the actual celebration was begun, and passing on up to the Temple courts gathered within the sacred edifice until room for more there was none. Every room of every house within the city now became tenanted, while tents were spread like banners to the distant eye, without the walls, on the hillside and in valley, until that great swarm of humanity had hived itself within Jerusalem and its surroundings.

Near the "Beautiful Gate," and within the court of the Gentiles, was the market-place, a vast corral in which cattle were kept, while along the sides were booths in which sat merchants selling doves and pigeons, and money-changers ready to exchange Jewish shekels of silver for the brass and copper coins of



MERCHANTS ON THE ANCIENT TEMPLE ROAD.—From *The Christian Herald.*

Greece and Rome: a set of Shylocks, who took every possible advantage, for being Gentiles they thought it proper to defraud the Jews, and to make the largest profit out of religious zeal. Lambs and oxen were purchased by the rich for sacrificial purposes, while doves and pigeons were bought to become offerings of the poor. But yet other merchants sold caftans and abbas, bright red and blue vests, head coverings and long robes for rich worshipers, who also purchased jewelry from the same venders.

Purging the Temple.

It was a degrading as well as a demoralizing sight to witness the base uses to which the Temple reared to the Lord had been put, a profanation and defilement scarcely less than that wrought by Ahaz when he took away so much of the altar service and set it up anew for use in the reinstitution of idol worship. And when Jesus came within this court of the Gentiles, and looking everywhere around His eye swept over the impious desecration of His Father's house, the holy spirit within Him was aroused as it never was before or since. Anger painted His cheek, indignation flamed in His eye, and excitement shook His frame. What! is this a Temple raised to God? do priests minister here? is this a congregating place for law-observing and reverently-worshiping Jews? If so, why is this infamous sacrilege permitted? why do not the priestly officers purge this enclosure of the active iniquity that here holds highest revel on the most solemnly sacred occasions? Every one has a commission to defend the Lord and His institutions; hence, though Jesus was to the eye of the wicked only a Galilean peasant, He took upon Himself the duty that properly belonged to those appointed for the care of the Temple and the administration of the holy service, and seizing some fragments of ropes which he saw lying upon the ground, with these simple instruments He drove the sacrilegious barterers from the court, chiding them for the evil of having turned His Father's house into a place for buying and selling. And with such precipitation did the Gentile traders abandon their possessions under dread of the Holy One that the cattle went into a panic, tables were overturned, spilling piles of money upon the pavements, and jewelry and rich garments lay scattered in such confusion that ownership must have been hard to establish.

What an excitement was created by the attack which Jesus made upon the venders of so many articles in the Temple. Why, Jerusalem was almost in a tumult; a storm of holy rage had broken among the crowds that had flocked from far and near to attend a festival. What could it mean? When the first wave of anger and excitement had spent its force, the people began to look at one another and to ask questions as well as to inwardly inquire: "Who is this Man, that with a few broken cords can drive hundreds from their accustomed places?



"YE HAVE MADE MY FATHER'S HOUSE A DEN OF THIEVES."

who can destroy a business winked at by the priests and firmly established through long sufferance?'' Even the disciples were confounded for they had no understanding of the heavenly authority by which Jesus had done such a remarkable thing. But this second miracle, wrought within their own sight, was to have a significance greater than the first, for, while it was a manifestation of the power of Christ over men, the act prepared the way for His declaration to the people. At one stroke He had developed before the eyes of the wondering spectators from a peasant into a God. They now began to flock about Him, and to ask, ''By what authority have You purified this Temple.'' ''We recognize in You some wondrous being, but pray, tell us who You are and what is Your mission.'' ''What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?''

But Jesus was not ready to answer their questions fully; He had a wise purpose in restraining their curiosity for a time, since a sudden declaration of His Messiahship might have incited a riot, for the Jews were unprepared for the coming of a Saviour in the appearance of a peasant, and they were particularly jealous of their traditions. So to their inquiries Jesus only replied, ''Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up.'' This answer the Jews could not interpret, though they supposed it was an arrogant pretension of Divine power, which they haughtily resented, and after a time returned again to their ungodliness, in a renewal of the defilements of the Temple which Jesus had so singularly rebuked. But there were others who, while not understanding the obscure reply made by Christ, saw the justice of His wrath at the priestly tolerance of customs which polluted the Temple, and these being drawn by sympathy more closely to Him came soon to believe on Him as the promised Saviour, and were rewarded with other manifestations of His Divinity.

Nicodemus Seeks an Interview with Jesus.

Among the few who were inclined to accept Jesus as the Messiah, and who had been permitted to behold some of His miracles, was a distinguished Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler among the Jews, and withal rich and a member of the Sanhedrim. He may have been one who was instrumental in sending a committee of inquiry to John, and had therefore interested himself in the reports current concerning John and the appearance of the Messiah which the Baptist was preaching. But Nicodemus was a learned man, as were all the rabbis, and to his learning was added the wisdom of impartialism, as opposed to the dogmatism and bigotry of the school to which he belonged. Having seen much that was startling, if not convincing, and heard many witnesses speak, of their knowledge, concerning the power of Jesus, Nicodemus at length determined to seek for the proof of what he already believed to be true. To do this he must see Jesus and speak with Him face to face, and hear from His lips an expounding of the doctrine He was

to preach, as well also an explanation of His mission ; to explore, in private conversation, His greatness ; to examine the evidence of His Divinity, and to learn when the restoration of Israel would be accomplished.

But laudable as was the ambition of Nicodemus, and great as was his wisdom, he yet had the human weakness of dreading public opinion, which even a righteous conscience could not confront. Jesus was in disfavor among the masses as yet ; He was regarded as scarcely the equal of many pretenders who had laid claim to the possession of divine attributes, only to be ignominiously exposed. Nicodemus could not rise above a common infirmity and expose himself to popular contempt by openly meeting Christ, so he resolved to visit Him secretly, selecting night as the most appropriate time, when Jesus would be least engaged, and when there was little chance of himself being seen. It was therefore a stealthy going forth, a night masquerading, a secret visit, though upon a holy purpose.

Finding Jesus at some lowly lodging—it may have been in Bethany—Nicodemus hails Him with obsequious speech, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him."

Did Nicodemus finish the first sentence of his address? Did he not, after thus greeting Jesus, follow with some inquiry concerning the kingdom of God ; or did Christ anticipate his desire, reading his heart, comprehending his thoughts, foreseeing his purpose? We must believe the latter, for John, who was doubtless present at the interview, represents the Saviour as immediately answering, "Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." This remark was evidently uttered as a prelude to the lesson of instruction which our Lord had determined to impart, knowing that Nicodemus would seek an explanation of such a dark saying, and thus prepared the way for a discourse on the requirements put upon man in his relations to God, and the duties inseparable from his estate.

The anticipations of Christ were correct, for Nicodemus at once asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" It was not his ignorance of the true meaning of the Lord's remark that made Nicodemus propound such an inquiry, for being a rabbi and a learned man he was familiar with the ceremony performed upon the adoption of the Jewish faith by any one from another nation, at which the seal of conversion was denominated "a second birth." His object therefore was very clearly to encourage Christ to reveal to him His theory of salvation, if not the Divine plan, for Nicodemus was not yet thoroughly convinced of the Divinity of Jesus. Having now been asked to explain the purpose and the authority of His teachings, Christ made plain to his anxious visitor the necessity of spiritual regeneration, through the outward ceremonial of baptism, as the essential condition to fellowship in the Kingdom of God. To make His instruction

particularly clear to the Rabbi, Jesus drew illustrations from nature by which to impress His meaning, and to distinguish the difference between the spiritual and the material body, which Nicodemus did not understand before. But more than this, Christ foreshadowed to His interested listener the sacrifice which He had been sent to provide, and the atonement which He was to suffer for the sins of the world, saying, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."



FOR OF SUCH ARE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.
Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

When Nicodemus parted from Jesus it may be that he only half comprehended, or else half doubted the words of Christ, though it was evident that he carried away with him a semi-conviction, equal to the measure of his belief when he first determined to seek an interview. But his timidity was such that he spoke to no one concerning his visit, or the instructions he had received.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DISCOURSE BY THE WELL.

JESUS probably left Jerusalem directly upon the close of the Pascal festival, and with His disciples went through Judea, visiting many of the villages, but tarried no considerable time in any place. His active ministry began in Jerusalem, but it was not until He had gone into the region of Judea, outside of the Holy City, that He began to preach and the disciples who followed Him to baptize in His name. Heretofore, under John's teachings, baptism was but the sign of repentance, and a covenant to observe the rigid regulations of Jewish ordinances, which was a painful thralldom that only a subordinated conscience could submit to: a self-abasement; a torment of natural desires, and the rigors of self-denial that precluded the operation of that Divine liberty and love which is the holiest attribute of a godly mind. When Jesus came before the people He taught a higher conception of God; a religion that had for its chief corner-stone the love of one another and the freedom of conscience when purified or regenerated by faith in the mercy, the love, the compassion and the provident care of God. Baptism of itself was not relied on except as a sign, among men, of conversion, and hence to His disciples did Jesus delegate the duty of administering the rite, as an act of man, in contradistinction to the seal of God's indwelling in the heart of the candidate, for by the heart alone does God judge all persons.

The new teachings of Jesus, as opposed to the binding intolerance of John's cold asceticism, quickly obtained such general approval that all Judea went out to hear Him. The people in lower Galilee who had been crowding about John, having heard of the greater teacher, who was stirring up the people of all Judea, gradually fell away from the Baptist until his few remaining followers, growing jealous of the larger success of Jesus, complained to him of what they regarded as the fickleness of the people. But instead of sharing their feelings John explained to them the true Messiahship of Jesus, and told them that thenceforth he must decrease while Christ, the Holy Son of God, would increase.

The effect of the Lord's sudden popularity among the masses not only created a jealousy, but a bitter hostility now manifested itself among the Pharisees—the priests, scribes and elders—whose influence with the people they found was melting away under the hot focus of Christ's exposure of their vain pretences, and the mockery of their no-longer expressive ceremonials. They had rejected

John as a fanatic, and they now "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," and they were ready to carry their hostility against Jesus to the extreme of inflicting the harshest punishments. So threatening did their bitter enmity and jealousy become that Christ withdrew from Judea, and proceeded to Galilee, His departure probably being hastened by the arrest of John, who was shortly before this time taken by order of Herod Antipas and thrown into the fortress prison of Machærus, which was on the east coast of the Red Sea.

Through Samaria.

Jesus had been preaching in Judea for a period of nearly nine months before retiring from that region, but while His works must have been great, since His audiences were always very large, yet it does not appear that He made any considerable number of converts. It is therefore most reasonable to suppose that the purpose of His ministrations in that section was to sow seeds for an after harvest; to prepare the people for an acceptance of the greater works which He was afterwards to perform; to gradually bring to their comprehension a Messiah who, instead of appearing sitting on a cloud of glory and marshaling the hosts of heaven in battle array for a furious descent upon the enemies of Israel, would come in the guise of a peasant, bearing the infirmities of a man, and reasoning with the power of one learned in the law; as one whose mission was to first instruct before declaring His Majesty; to open the heart as well as enlighten the understanding; to create a faith; to tear away the barriers set up for temporal uses of the Levitical class, and lift the blind devotees of priestcraft to an eminence from which they might perceive the true character of God, and learn what was necessary to their salvation.

Instead of turning to the northeast and passing over the common route of travel, which led through Peræa, Jesus chose a shorter, though more dangerous road that passed through Samaria, the province which separated Galilee from Judea. Samaria, though a central portion of the Holy Land, was alienated from Israel, by reason of its occupation by foreigners, brought in to settle the district anew after the captivity of the ten tribes: "men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof." These people, thus introduced by Esarhaddon, brought with them the idolatrous customs of the Babylonians, but a plague breaking out amongst them shortly after their settlement led them to believe that it was a visitation of divine anger at their refusal to accept the God of the Jews. So general did this belief soon become among the Samaritans that they dispatched an embassy to Babylon to request that Jewish priests be sent to instruct them in the worship of the Israelites. Their petition was granted, and under the

teachings of rabbis they became worshipers of God, but yet they did not wholly discard their images. When, therefore, Cyrus sent Nehemiah to superintend the construction of a new Temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans offered to assist in the work, no doubt honestly intending to devote their services to the Lord in a union of worship with the Jews. But instead of accepting their overtures, and welcoming them to brotherhood, as the Jews did other heathens baptized in the



GROUP OF MODERN SAMARITANS.

faith, they were rejected with insults and scorning. Shortly after this there was such dissatisfaction among the Jews with the administration of Nehemiah, that a large body not only dissented but went over to the Samaritans, whom they joined in the building of a rival Temple on Mount Gerizim. This Temple was afterwards destroyed by John Hyrcanus, so that only the ruins remained at the time of Christ, but the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans still survived,

notwithstanding that many of the latter claimed Jewish descent. In the time of Alexander (B. C. 332) the Samaritans claimed exemption from the payment of tribute in the Sabbatical year on the ground that they were descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh ; and the woman with whom Jesus held discourse at the well, as will be presently described, intimates her Israelitish blood by the question, "Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well?"

But while the Samaritans were peaceable, and, indeed, were of a hospitable and kindly disposition, they were regarded with such hostile feelings by the Jews that even the Apostles shared in this unreasonable enmity, and when Jesus went among them His disciples believed that any act of inhospitality upon the part of the Samaritans would be punished by the Lord sending fire from heaven to consume them.

The Beautiful Vale of Mukhna.

Into the district of Samaria Jesus set His way, lightly regarding the dangers which compassed a Jew in that direction. Out of the hill country of Judea, with its sterile peaks and rock-bestrewn roads, into the great and fertile plain of Esdraelon, by splendid pasture lands, over vast stretches of alternating hill and valley blossoming with corn, and orchards, and gardens, and vineyards, and with crowns of olives, and walnuts and figs. Out of Esdraelon into the plain of Mukhna and on into the valley which separates the great mountains of Ephraim ; to the left Gerizim, and to the right Ebal, while beyond, near the head of the valley, where it narrows, lies the village of Nablus, the ancient Shechem—the Sychar of John. The town is now but an ugly scar on a hillside, but was, in the time of Christ, a spot memorable for its beauty, the centre of a landscape of exuberant nature ; of groves of almond, pomegranate, olive, pear, plum and walnut, a beauteousness of surrounding unrivaled in all Palestine, while the town itself sat just above the base of a hill that brought into glorious panorama an extended view of incomparable picturesqueness. Here is where Abraham built an altar under an oak, in the days of Canaanitish possessions ; here is where Jacob rested after his return from Mesopotamia ; here he bought his first parcel of land, and which became the special patrimony of Joseph ; here Jacob dug a well through rock and soil, more than one hundred feet deep, perhaps two hundred—for it is forty feet shallower now than it was fifty years ago—and of a diameter of nine feet, and which flowed water enough for all his immense flocks ; under the oak of the mountain hard by the Shechemites made Abimelech king ; and the town became a possession of the Levites and a place of refuge. The well of Jacob and the tomb of Joseph are but a mile and a half east of the village, just beyond the hamlet of Balata, also called "the well of the Samaritan woman."



THE DISCOURSE AT THE WELL.—Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

The Samaritan Woman.

Trudging along the dusty road, under a sweltering sun at about the noon hour, Jesus and His disciples came to Jacob's well. They were both athirst and ahungered. Water is nowhere abundant in that region except immediately after a rain-fall ; the wadys are generally dry, and the heat great, so that poor travelers are apt to fare ill in an attempt to cross the country on foot. It was this scarcity of water, or the uncertainty of supply, that caused Jacob to expend so much time and labor in excavating, out of the solid limestone, a well so deep ; but he knew that the fertility of the adjacent country would well repay him, as it did. Being exhausted with heat, hunger and travel, Jesus sat down by the well-side while He sent His disciples on to the village of Sychar to buy food, Himself feeling so nearly famished that He was scarcely able to proceed further without refreshment. Seated under the cooling shadows of the trees which overhung the well, reflecting on the history of Israel and the momentous events that had transpired in this vicinity, His reverie was arrested by the approach of a woman bearing an earthen jar and rope upon her head, who had come to the well for water. His thirst had no doubt been already quenched, yet Christ asked her to please let down the jar and draw water that He might drink. Observing at once that He was a Jew, and knowing the antipathy which that race bore towards her people, she replied : "How is it Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" To awaken the woman to a conception of His Divinity, Jesus made answer : "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, 'Give Me to drink,' thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." But the woman did not comprehend His words, for with an expression of surprise she said, "Master, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep ; from whence then hast Thou that living water?" To this inquiry Jesus replied by explaining the difference between the water that quenches the thirst and which she came here to draw, and the living water that satisfies the soul and gives life everlasting to him who drinketh. This answer only served to increase her longing, and to excite a curiosity she had never felt before. She now begged Him to give her of this water that she might have no reason for coming so far to draw again. Seeing that she was still unable to comprehend His meaning, Jesus now chose to reveal to her His Divine wisdom, by asking the woman to call her husband. "I have no husband," she replied. "True," said Jesus, "you have no husband now, but you have had five husbands, all of whom have been divorced or dead, while the man with whom you are now living is not your husband."

The perfect knowledge which Jesus possessed and thus revealed to her concerning her private life made the woman stare with wonder, until with apparent inspiration she exclaimed, "Master, I perceive that Thou art a prophet." As she

was now prepared to receive His instructions, having become half conscious of His holy character as exhibited by the prophetic insight which He had thus displayed, she became eager to know more; to receive from Him that divine enlightenment which only a true prophet of the Lord might bestow. Hence she asked Him at which place was it more proper to worship, whether at Jerusalem, the holy city of Israel, or at Gerizim, the sacred mountain of the Samaritans. And why should she not ask this question? In the eyes of the Samaritans no place on earth was so hallowed as Gerizim. Their legends taught them that here was where God planted Paradise, and from the dust of this mountain Adam had been formed, and here he set up the first altar of worship. Upon this peak they believed the Ark of Noah rested after the flood, and from which the earth was re-peopled; here too was where Noah sacrificed, where Abraham made an offering of Isaac, where Jacob rested his head in sleep when the dream-vision of a ladder ascending into heaven awoke him to ecstsay; and where Joshua set up the twelve stones after his conquest of Canaan, and to the peak of which all Samaritans set their gaze when in prayer, and to which they looked in longing expectation for the Messiah's appearance.

Jesus First Declares His Messiahship.

Jesus had told the woman that the true Temple was in Jerusalem, but appreciating the prejudices of Jews and Samaritans alike, and particularly the receptive and dispassionate nature of the woman, He calmed her disquiet by replying to her question as to the true place of worship in this wise: "Believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Catching at His meaning but not yet comprehending the whole, she says, "I know that Messiah cometh. When He is come, He will tell us all things." Now was the time to throw the full light of revelation upon her, for having seen the dawn she was thus prepared for a full burst of sunlight into her understanding, so He answered, "I that speak to thee am He!" This was the first time Jesus positively acknowledged His Messiahship, and that He withheld such declaration from the Jews, to reveal it to a Samaritan, to a people who for centuries had been under the ban of Jewish proscription and abuse, is a problem to be solved only by consideration of the relative receptivity to religious teachings of the two races. The Jews were intrenched behind immemorial bigotry and theatrical ceremonial, and had grown in intensity of intolerance through priestly ambition and a diversion to their own worldly uses of the sacred service and holy ritual of the Mosaic institution of worship. They were obdurate, arrogant and insolent, and opposed

to everything that contravened their preconceived opinions, to which national disposition is no doubt due the small success that attended Christ's preaching in Judea.

The Goodly Qualities of the Samaritans.

The Samaritans were not only opposed to the Jews in their political and religious life, but in custom, social habits and sympathy also. Though an importation, so to speak, from heathen lands, the Samaritans were distinguished for their kindness, charity and great hospitality, which Jesus acknowledged in more than one of His sublime illustrations teaching men the true worship of God through acts of mercy done to one another. Of the ten lepers whom Jesus healed only one, a Samaritan, gave Him thanks. Of the hundreds who passed by the wounded man who lay by the wayside, only one, a Samaritan, ministered to him and bound up his hurts. And as Jesus came not to the Jews alone, but as a Saviour to all people, so He naturally revealed Himself as the Son of God to a Samaritan in whom He would find a sympathy, and a willingness to receive His teachings, which the stiff-necked Jews had refused.

At the moment that Jesus announced His Messiahship to the Samaritan woman, His disciples returned from Sychar bearing provisions which, knowing His hunger after such long fasting, they pressed Him to eat. To their invitation He replied that He had meat to eat which they knew not of, that meat of which He had before spoken. Then to make His meaning more perfectly understood He rose up, and looking down the widening valley where the fields were yet awaiting the sower, He said to His disciples: "You say it will be four months before harvest; but then will come the harvest for the sickle; look now toward every part of the land, the seeds of sin are whitening unto a harvest of righteousness; therefore the Lord's laborers must thrust in their sickles not reaping only but threshing also, to purify, to cleanse unto salvation; he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal. Hence my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work."

As the disciples addressed Jesus upon their return, asking why he talked with a Samaritan, the woman left her water-pot and hastened to her home where she spread the news of Christ having come into the vicinity, and related the wondrous things which He had told her. Probably through curiosity to confirm or disprove her assertions; or to see a prophet, or learn the cause for her infatuation, many men came out to meet Jesus. They may have approached Him to offer an indignity, to avenge upon Him their hatred for all Jews; but if they had any such harsh feelings upon going out of their city, these quickly changed upon a sight of His loving countenance when they drew near. And when He addressed them in kindly speech, they listened with respectful attention and they felt such admiration for His teachings that they besought Him to return

home with them. Observing here a fertile field for His labors Christ went into the Samaritan city, and remained for a period of two days, during which time many were converted and accepted Him as "Christ the Saviour of the world."

Accepted by the Galileans.

After a pleasant visit at Nablus, Jesus took leave of His Samaritan friends and continued His journey into Galilee. He probably passed through or near



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Nazareth, and went on to Cana, for receiving a royal greeting there He said to His friends, "A prophet is not without honor save in His own country," thus intimating that He could not expect, or had been refused, a generous welcome at the hands of the Nazarenes.

But in Cana it was different; many there were who had been witness to His first miracle; while many others had attended the Paschal festival at Jerusalem

and seen how He drove the brokers and merchants from the Temple, and the other miracles which He performed there. So word went quickly through the village, and was borne over the hills by travelers, and conveyed by swift report to all the people living within a wide radius: "Jesus has returned to Cana; the wonderful man who performs miracles, and who certainly has the seal of DIVINITY upon Him, has come back to show forth His works." And the whole country was ablaze with excitement: a splendid welcome, indeed; a joy to Christ in again meeting His mother and His devoted, trusting and worshipful friends; and an occasion for thanksgiving for those who felt the presence of such a HOLY ONE, who brought honor and glory to their town and means of salvation to all the people. If there were drums they must have been beaten; if there were banners they must have been flung to the wind; if there were musical instruments they must have been set playing. Oh, what a holiday for Cana, what a festival for all Galilee!



MODERN STYLE OF TRAVELING IN PALESTINE.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CURE IN HIGH LIFE.

NEWS did not speed on lightning wings or whirring train in the days of Christ, but good report, in which all people were concerned, flew swiftly by aid of horse and camel and fleet foot and intercommunication. Capernaum was twenty miles away, but as if borne by whispering winds, the glad intelligence of Christ's return to Cana quickly reached that place. Peter may have been the messenger, returning home after a nine months' absence spent with Jesus; but if not Peter, then some other trustworthy person carried the happy news. And there was one person in Capernaum to whom the information was especially gladdening, though he may never have seen Jesus or regarded Him with great concern until the hour that affliction excited his hopes. It is true that the miracles wrought by Jesus had been reported to Herod Antipas, and that his foster brother, Manaen, and that Joanna, wife of the king's steward, and many other influential persons had made public acknowledgment of their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, but we are not told that any officers of the court were believers. But to one of the fine residences of Capernaum there had come a visitor that drove out thought of worldly ambition and princely luxury, and left the sorrow of a deep affliction in their place. A nobleman's son had been stricken with a fever and lay so ill that the air from the wings of death could almost be felt. On a rich couch, with sumptuous surroundings, lay the sufferer, whose hectic cheeks, quickened pulse, short respirations, parched tongue, and staring eyes, showed how tightly he was embraced by the hot arms of a deadly fever. Mother had spent the hours of night as well as of day bathing his temples, wetting his swollen lips, smoothing his dry forehead, speaking soothing words while her eyes were wet from weeping and her heart bursting with grief. Father, a nobleman of degree, almost princely of rank, but now an unstrung man, wrung by this great affliction, stood in the sick chamber with bated breath, his tongue almost as useless as that of his dying boy, and his eyes looking into vacancy. The doctors had probably told him how hopeless was the case, and leaving some narcotic or quieting febrifuge as a last prescription had turned away with the assurance that skill of earthly physician could do no more. Oh, what a sad hour was this to the rich man, whose wealth and position could only be a mockery now; which could only serve to emphasize the puerility, the weakness, the extreme helplessness of the most exalted when brought to answer the inexorable law of nature.

Hope Points the Way to Jesus.

But in the moment of his most profound grief the nobleman learns of the presence of Jesus in Cana. Quick to his mind he recalled the many reports current of the miracles performed, of the sick healed, of all the splendid deeds of charity performed by Christ. Without hesitating to reason on the probability of the truth of these reports, without waiting to call Manaen, or Peter, the nobleman decides promptly, immediately, to call Jesus. Saddling up the swiftest horse, making the most hurried preparation, he sets out for Cana, nor stops for food or water until he comes into the Divine presence, about one o'clock in the afternoon. There may have been a crowd about Jesus, but being one in authority the nobleman would not hesitate to press his way through, and without scarcely preceding his request with a salutation, so urgent the occasion, he addressed the Lord with anxious speech and with evidence of intense grief, "Come down and heal my son." Jesus, observing his anxiety, had great compassion for the nobleman, but embraced the opportunity of imparting a lesson in faith as well as to give proof of His Messiahship. So He answered, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." But the nobleman would not be brought into a discussion, time was too precious; therefore with tears of supplication, in which faith in Christ's power was clearly exhibited, he again besought, "Sir, come down ere my child die." For his faith he was rewarded with an assurance that must have made his heart leap with joy; which must have thrilled him with ecstasy greater than any he had ever felt before: "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

That the nobleman was not puffed up with arrogance or doubted the power of Jesus, is proved by the fact that, upon receiving assurance that his son would recover, he departed so leisurely for Capernaum that it took him twenty-four hours to travel back over the distance which he had accomplished, in his eagerness to find Jesus, in less than six. As he was nearing Capernaum some of his servants went out to meet him, being anxious to bear the joyful news of his son's recovery, and as they announced to him the glad tidings, he showed no more concern than a desire to verify what he already believed—so great was his faith—that the cure was coincident with the pronouncement of Jesus. And he found it to be so, "and himself believed, and his whole house."

Bloody Desecration of the Temple.

After healing the nobleman's son, Jesus went into retirement for a season of several months, no doubt spending a while with His mother in Nazareth. The disciples had in the meantime returned to their respective vocations, and the ministrations of both Lord and followers ceased. The cause of their temporary disappearance from public view may be found, as Geikie states, in two events which transpired about this time; John the Baptist, who had been repining in prison,



THE ANCIENT CITY OF TIBERIAS, ON LAKE GALILEE, AS IT NOW APPEARS.—From *The Christian Herald*.

but who was so strong in the affections of the people that it was believed Antipas would soon release him, was now brought from his imprisonment, at the instigation of Herodias, and beheaded. This act created such an agitation that for a while a revolt was threatened which promised to array the Galileans against the Pharisees and to bring on civil revolution. The great excitement under which the people now labored unfitted them for religious instructions, and the continued appearance of Jesus before large crowds would have intensified and aggravated the situation, and probably led to His own apprehension by order of Antipas.

At the Feast of Tabernacles, held either in the preceding year or in the fall following the return of Jesus to Cana, there occurred a shocking scene in Jerusalem precipitated by the Roman garrison, who, by acts of intolerance towards the pilgrims from Galilee, aroused the latter to a brave and sturdy resistance. An *emeute* followed, which soldiers from the fortress of Antonia were sent to quell, and so violently did they assail the Galileans that they drove the latter into the Temple and followed them even into the courts of that sacred place and slaughtered them with a very fiendish bloodthirstiness. The unfortunates who took refuge in the Temple were not only killed by the soldiers, but their offerings of cattle and sheep were also butchered that blood of beasts might mingle with that of the slain (Luke xiii. 1). To add fuel to the flame of excitement which the murder of John and the slaughter of the Galileans had started, Judas, a Galilean, who had led the first insurrection against Rome, was stirring the people up, by impassioned appeals, to arise and establish the Kingdom of God by the sword. The wildest religious fanaticism took possession of the Galileans particularly, who began to look towards Jesus as a leader in the revolt, but from which He shrank with feelings of abhorrence; for His was a mission of peace and good-will; a binding up of the nation's differences in the diffusion of a universal fellowship founded upon forgiveness, mercy, charity, love and righteousness. Hence He retired for a season and remained in seclusion until the disturbances subsided.

Jesus Appears in the Synagogue at Nazareth.

The events thus recorded are only intimated by Luke and are not mentioned by any of the Apostles, nor does it appear from the Scriptural text that Jesus withdrew from the public ministry, for following (as it appears) the healing of the nobleman's son He appeared at Nazareth, and on the Sabbath opened the service in the synagogue. Being accepted as a rabbi He was given the roll, at His request, from which to read. It was the custom, as we are told in Acts xv. 12, to read the law of Moses in the synagogue every Sabbath day, the reading being consecutive and so divided as to require three years to read the whole. But there was also another roll on which was written the prophecies, and portions of these were also read in the opening service, or preliminary to the regular discourse.

Whether by accident, in pursuance of Divine purpose, or it chanced that the verse was appointed for that day's service, the fact is no less remarkable, that when Jesus opened the roll His eyes rested upon the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, first verse, from which He read the following Divinely appropriate words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."



JEWISH PRIEST, AND ROLL OF MANUSCRIPT EMBRACING THE PENTATEUCH.

Having thus read (the text of Luke iv. being slightly different from that of Isaiah), Jesus closed the roll, and sitting down, began to preach to the congregation. In so doing He practically usurped the duty of the regular reader, and also of the officiating rabbi; but was He not both the Law and the Gospel, and hence above the priest and the synagogue? Closing the roll, His first utterance was, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Having thus spoken He gave a full exposition of the meaning of the text and its fulfillment in His appearance, though He did not attempt to present proofs of His Messiahship. But having declared Himself as the Messiah He anticipated the resentfulness of His hearers, who would ask evidence of His claims, in the performance of such miracles as He was reported to have accomplished elsewhere, and He therefore answered their

tacit objections by saying, "Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country." He then recalled to their minds the fact that Elijah had foretold the famine that would prevail for three and a half years in Israel to no one but a widow woman of Sarepta; and of the many lepers in the time of Elisha that prophet had healed only Naaman; yet the people believed in Elijah and Elisha, nor required repeated manifestations of their power, as instruments of God. The rebuke was so direct, the reflection upon their corruptness so palpable, that the Jews sitting within sound of His voice become not only uneasy but hostile. They looked at one another in amazement and said, with an air of surprise at His pretensions, "Why, is not this the son of Joseph, the carpenter, our townsman? has He not grown up amongst us? has He had any advantages of schooling? though He speaks wisely is He not unfitted for the priesthood? was there anything remarkable in His boyhood? do we not know His sisters and brothers, and that they are all, like Himself, common people? Humph! the presumption of this Man is amazing; not only comparing Himself with our greatest prophets but actually declaring Himself the Messiah that is to come." And their jealous rage was so increased that, probably moved by one bolder spirit in the congregation, they rose up like a mob, and seizing Jesus they hustled Him with rough usage to the brow of a ledge shelving off the hill on which the synagogue stood, intending to hurl Him upon the rock below. "But His time was not yet come." On the instant the mob cease their murderous clamors; their arms fall, their feet falter, their lips grow mute. As God paralyzed the hand of Jeroboam so He now palsied the limbs of the mobocratic Jews, and they were compelled to see the object of their wrath pass harmless through their midst, triumphant in their discomfiture.

Call to the Fishermen.

Rejected and despised by His own townspeople, who were so ingrained with bigotry, and so vain of their institutions and pompous ceremonials, contaminated as they were by the abuses of priestly ambition, that they were no longer disposed towards the truth or revelation, Jesus left Nazareth and went to reside at Capernaum, on the shore of Lake Galilee, probably making His home with Peter, and here He began His ministry again. It was in Galilee that His labors were to bear the richest fruits, in fulfillment of both prophecy and tradition: the land to which Isaiah pointed in his grand prefigurement: "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by way of the sea, beyond Galilee of the Gentiles: The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." In this land the Jews have long looked for the Messiah, and still hold so sacredly to the belief that His appearance will be made there that many Jews assemble each year at Tiberias, one of their holy cities, in expectation of witnessing His coming.



THE CALLING OF SIMON AND ANDREW.—Drawn by Bida.

A more beautiful country it is hard to find than the region about Capernaum, and to the beauty of the landscape was added great hospitality of the people. It was a region the best adapted to the preparation of Christ's teaching; a field awaiting the sower; a field fallow from long disuse, and rich from the accumulations of abuses which the people themselves had grown weary of. In Galilee, as in all parts of Judah, the dispensations of Moses had become obsolete, and hypocritical ceremony, under pretence of observing the law, had grown into "theocratic slavery." In short, Israel was spiritually dead, and this moribund condition of the ancient faith and teaching was due directly to a hierarchy that regarded only a zeal for the rabbinical precepts, an outward show without even respect to an accountability to God. Worldly ambition had usurped the throne of conscience and of faith. The people realized this even though they were under priestly domination. Hence, when Christ came preaching a new dispensation, a new religion, in which ceremony and rites, and sacrifices and genuflexions before priests had small part, He found not a few ready to receive Him gladly. He came to do away with the old, to teach the folly of putting new wine into old bottles, or patching up old clothes with new pieces. His call was therefore to repentance, the arousing of Israel to their shortcomings, to their decay as a people under the emasculating effects of shallow pretences, in which the spirit of their ancient faith was no longer discoverable. He came asking, Are you just? are you pure? are you God-fearing and God-serving? do you love one another? do you keep the commandments? He did not care to know, for it was unimportant, whether the people observed all the feast and fast days, or whether they went regularly to the synagogue services; or whether their phylacteries were broad or narrow; or whether they were faithful to the rigorous laws respecting the Sabbath. All these were but travesties on holy ordinances, so long as their observance was wanting in the true spirit of righteousness.

The doctrine which Jesus taught appealed so directly to the loftiest purpose and best ambitions of man, and quickened the heart to such a true conception of the nature of God, that He converted thousands through the conviction of His reasoning, independent of the Messianic power which He exhibited in the working of miracles.

The Disciples Called to their Labors.

It was doubtless directly upon His visit to Capernaum that He sought the beach of Galilee, and there seeing His two first disciples, Simon Peter and Andrew, cast in their nets, He called to them, saying, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." In response to the Divine summons they immediately left off fishing, and joining Him the three walked along the beach until He saw two other fishermen, who were also brothers, named James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee. John was, with Peter, the first follower of Jesus, and he

was afterwards to be known as the "beloved disciple," faithful in all things. His brother James may have also known the Lord, but if not He was certainly acquainted with Him through reports He had heard from John, and was therefore glad to become a follower. The party now being augmented to five they went back to Capernaum, where, on the Sabbath succeeding, Jesus went into the synagogue to preach. The power of His speech was so great and His reasoning so earnest and convincing that the audience was both astonished and felicitated. The congregation could not help comparing Him with the rabbis and scribes whom duty required them to listen to as long as they could prevent sleep from shutting up their ears. The same thing uttered Sabbath after Sabbath, the same monotone of meaningless instruction, the same forms, that had become obsolete so far as they had any significance, until church had become a place of preliminary torment. But how the people straightened in their seats when Christ began to preach ; the poor of sight rubbed the sleep and water from their eyes, while the dull of hearing made a trumpet of their hands. Why, what eloquence of speech ! what wealth of striking illustrations ! what sublime similes and metaphors and word-pictures ! what revelations ! what wisdom ! what doctrines ! No wonder that the congregation was astonished, "for His word was with power, and He taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes."

Undeviled.

The spiritual outpouring in the audience was great, the enthusiasm of conviction was tremendous ; the awakening to a new and holier faith was overpowering. But in the assemblage was a man who, Mark says, "had a spirit of an unclean devil." All devils are unclean ; they are the scavengers of humanity, as much as the hog is of brute or porcine creation. But the devil-possessed man interrupted the meeting, and hence Mark may have had a purpose in applying the word *unclean* as an epithet to express special vileness. And the devil cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone ; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace and come out of him."

Whether the demoniacs whom Jesus quieted and restored were lunatics, as many authors maintain, or were really possessed of devils, is a question which does not affect the importance of the miracles of their "casting out." It is hardly more wondrous to undevil a man than it is to restore reason, at a word, to the brain-distracted, the ravening, frenzied bedlamite—the re-enthronement of a mind lost in the darkness of shattered intellect. But if devils are instrumentalities of evil ; if to them the loss of Eden is due ; if they sought Jesus to tempt Him on the Temple height, and on Quarantana's peak, and in the wilderness ; and if Job

was afflicted through the operative spirit of a malicious and jealous devil, then we cannot believe that the power of demons was limited merely to outward control, since possession, through spiritual agency, follows by implication. And while the possession of a demon was confounded with many diseases, such as the various forms of lunacy, and especially of violent cases of epilepsy, yet the Lord distinctly recognizes the possession of devils in two instances, when He refers to the casting out of demons through Beelzebub, and the entrance of demons into the herd of swine at Gadara. Therefore, Dr. Smith says, "We are led to the ordinary and literal interpretation of these (scriptural) passages, that there are evil spirits, subjects of the Evil One who, in the days of the Lord himself, and His Apostles especially, were permitted by God to exercise a direct influence over the souls and bodies of certain men."

The acknowledgment of Jesus by the demoniac might have gone far towards establishing His claim to the Messiahship, because the people regarded the sayings of these possessed persons with great faith, as the utterances of a higher power than man. But Jesus would not permit the testimony of a devil to be accepted in His behalf; He would acknowledge no favors from the arch adversary whom He had been sent to oppose. Hence, waving His hand toward the victim, with much indignity, He says, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him!" And immediately the devil is forced by the Divine will to relinquish possession of the man, and to flee from the Holy Presence, but not until the evil spirit had thrown the demoniac to the floor and into convulsions, which caused him to cry out in agony as the devil gave him one final clutch. But after the struggle there was a calm as a second surprise to the witnesses. Rising from the floor with grateful spirit, the man fronts the audience with eyes that had suddenly lost their wildness, with lips that were no longer quivering, and with speech that bespoke the equilibrium of his brain, the restoration of his intellect, the freedom of his mind. And those who saw this wondrous thing, said one to another, "What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? for with authority and power commandeth He even the unclean spirits and they do obey Him."

A Typhoid Arrested.

The news of the service in the synagogue, the new doctrine which Christ preached, and the manifestation of His power to cast out devils, spread rapidly until soon every person in Galilee had heard of Him and began to flock to Capernaum to hear Him teach and to see His works. But this good deed done in the synagogue on the first Sunday of His stay in Capernaum was to be equaled by another before the day should be done. As Jesus and His four disciples came out of the synagogue, Simon Peter must have asked them to dine or sup at his house, which invitation being accepted, the five went on until some of

the house servants or neighbors of Simon met him with the sorrowing intelligence that his mother-in-law had been stricken with a fever and his presence was immediately required.

The report of the woman's illness, no doubt, made the whole party anxious to reach the bedside as quickly as possible, though Jesus foresaw the speedy termination of the affliction. But they hurried on till our Lord was brought into the sick room and saw the deeply-flushed cheek of the suffering mother-in-law, whereupon looking down upon her, He spoke comforting words and with His healing hand stroked the burning forehead, cooled the dry and hot lips, refreshed the parched body, tranquilized the hurried breathing. Then, so gently, so cheerily, so sympathetically, He took hold of the woman's hands and raised her up, when lo! she discovered that the fever had fled before the rebuke of the Saviour, and her restoration to health was upon the instant so complete that she set about the preparation of the meal to which Jesus and His disciples had been invited.

A Hospital in Motion.

The news of this first and second miracle spread with extraordinary celerity through the town. Strict Sabbatarian laws prevented the people from flocking to Him until after a trumpet blast at the setting of the sun proclaimed the close of the day. Then the excitement quickly became intense. Here came crowds of five, of ten, of a score, of a hundred, until "all the city was gathered together at the door" of Simon Peter's house. Not only the well, but the sick; some on crutches, some carried on cots, some in beds which they had not been able to leave for months. There were men, women, children, in all manner of affliction; the fever-stricken, the consumptive, the asthmatic; the epileptic, the palsied, "pining atrophy, marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence;" the blind, deaf, dumb; the apoplectic, the paralyzed, the cancerous; the lunatic, maniac, demoniac, "And all that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them."

What an amazing sight! what wonderment! what admiration! and what enrapturing, transporting, joy-infusing miracles were these! the touch that set abloom the rose of health on the pallid cheek of invalidism! the words that straightened distorted limbs and gave back strength to the wasted muscles! The world has never seen but one surgeon who could straighten the crooked limbs, cure the blind eye, or reconstruct the drum of a soundless ear, or reduce a dropsy without any pain at the time or any pain after, and that surgeon was Christ, the mightiest, grandest, gentlest and most sympathetic surgeon the world ever saw, or ever will see, and He deserves the confidence and love and worship and hosannahs of all the earth and hallelujahs of all heaven. "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear."

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTLY LABORS IN GALILEE.

WHEN the Lord withdrew from the great crowd that had gathered about Peter's door the stars must have pointed their jeweled fingers toward the midnight hour, and there was a joy in Capernaum greater than ever felt before; gratitude and thanksgiving folded up the wings of sleep and bound them with silken fetters of praise-offerings. Those that had been ill went to their homes to rejoice, while the Holy Physician retired to His bed to rest against the labors of the morrow. But knowing that the news of the wonders which He had performed would quickly bring other crowds about Him, gathered from the adjacent region, He arose before it was yet day and sought a quiet place where He might pray and commune with God. This withdrawal became a custom with Jesus. He may have begun it in the early years of His youth, for as the Son of God He must have sought Fatherly advice long before entering upon His ministry, but the Apostles do not mention His retirement for prayerful purpose until the morning following His wondrous works at Capernaum, "When He went out [of Peter's house] and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." But how natural an act, how pursuant to the commission which He had been sent into the world to fulfill; how dutiful and respectful was it to the will of God. And He prayed not only for Divine direction, but also as an act of filial love, and in His prayers He held counsel with His Father, and received anew that strength, that grace, that instruction which comes alone from God.

But it was only a short while after His departure from the house that Jesus was missed. Even as the gray of breaking morning began to appear, crowds assembled about Peter's door to behold and to receive blessings from the Holy One. "But He is gone," word quickly passed from one to another. A consternation of regret seized all the gathering, and their cries of grief became so great that Peter's compassion prompted him to lead the people to the place where his Lord had sought seclusion. Probably Peter was accompanied by Andrew and John and James, and going before the throng they found Jesus and apprised Him of the anxiety of the multitude that was seeking Him. But having no desire for popular applause, and feeling that He had already given Capernaum sufficient evidence of His Messiahship, He answered, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth." A great majority of



THE TOMB OF THE VIRGIN, NEAR JERUSALEM.—From *The Christian Herald.*

persons depend upon outward manifestations rather than inward workings of the Spirit. Those who had been witnesses to His miracles were therefore more ready to be surprised by the performance of wonders than to be converted by the teachings which He imparted. All men shrink from a revelation of their misdeeds ; if they have faults they do not want them aired publicly, and least likely are they to confess them upon accusation. Jesus had not only done miracles, but He boldly denounced the sinfulness of the people and, exposing their vanities, which had drawn them away from God, taught that purification, regeneration, can only come through self-conviction, and self-conviction is dependent upon self-scrutiny, a reflecting upon wrong committed and disobedience to God. Having given all Capernaum a proof of His power over disease, Jesus taught the people the means necessary to salvation, and He was therefore justified in leaving them to ponder His words, to rest the proofs of His teachings on the miracles which He had performed, for if accepted as the Anointed One of God, it must be by the heart rather than by the material understanding. This teaching and evidence it now became His duty to give others, for He was to preach not to one congregation, or to one province, or to one nation, but unto the Gentile and Jew alike, and to all people.

Circles of Mercy.

When the persuasion of His disciples proved ineffectual to change His purpose, Jesus was besieged by the gathering with implorations to remain, but He replied to every petition in the same manner, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent." Now began His circuit of Galilee, not probably so extended as it was thorough, for He preached in all the synagogues, visited, most likely, all the towns, and in every place He not only taught, but exercised His Divine power in healing all manner of diseases. There was no locality in Galilee, I am sure, that did not have grateful witness to His beneficent work ; long lines of sick, and crippled, and deformed, and blind, came like files of troops marching to quarters, and gathered about Him seeking that help which physicians had been unable to give. With touch, or word, or motion, one after another was healed of all infirmity, until those who came on pallet, or crutch, or unsteady limbs, went away in full vigor, leaping and praising, and carrying the glad news of their sudden restoration to others in misfortune. It was not one, or a dozen, or a hundred, but thousands of the worst disease-infested, and poison-infested, and hereditarily afflicted that Christ ministered to with invariable success. No wonder that people came flocking to Him from such distant provinces as Judah on the south and Syria on the northeast, and Peræa beyond the Dead Sea, and that wherever He went there multitudes were found encamped.



THEY BROUGHT LITTLE CHILDREN UNTO HIM, AND HE TOOK THEM IN HIS ARMS AND BLESSED THEM.

The Worst Disease Extirpated.

There was no disease that could baffle the skill of the Great Physician, just as there was no sorrow that He could not dispel, and no hope that He could not fulfill, and no suffering heart that He could not lift up and irradiate with joy. While the works which He performed in making this circuit of Galilee are barely referred to by the Apostles, we appreciate their immeasurable greatness none the less, for if He healed all manner of sickness, and His fame spread so far by reason of the miracles done, we know that He was busy dispensing His gracious influence from early morning until far into the night, preaching one hour and curing the afflicted for the next six, so that he took little rest, finding refreshment in the labor of doing good and preaching salvation.

Luke gives us to understand that during Christ's itinerancy in Galilee He performed one miracle which the Evangelist considered of such extraordinary importance that he thought it proper to record the facts, and thus preserve them to future generations. The narrative is brief: "And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who, seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And He put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And He charged him to tell no man; but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

There was a reason for Luke attaching so much importance to this miracle, above all others that he had heard of Christ performing before. The restoring of a sightless eye, the straightening of a twisted limb, the cooling of a raging fever, was as much a manifestation of Omnipotent power over the flesh as the healing of a leper, but there was a broader significance attached to the latter by reason of the Mosaic law which condemned lepers to perpetual ostracism from society.

Of all diseases that afflict humanity that of leprosy is at once the most loathsome, the most deadly and the most horrible. No remedy has ever been discovered that will relieve the sufferer or abate its progress. It makes its appearance in more simple form than an incipient cancer, its progress is more insidious, and its termination more dreadful. First a speck, then a scale, gradually spreading from eyelid to palms, then dotting the body, but always enlarging, always eating. From swellings, pustules form, which, breaking into open sores, leave the tissue a quicker prey to its never-sated appetite. Devouring paths through the tissue, it seizes upon the bones and eats on into the marrow, reserving the vital organs for its last attacks. What monster of foul-breeding loathsomeness; what a remorseless, greedy, cruel and corrupting malady, that never releases its cankering clutch; that never gives a moment's pause to its malignant course; that moves on with venomous distillment until its invasion is arrested by death.

That from time immemorial men have regarded with supreme horror the victims of leprosy is most natural, and that the Mosaic law recognized the leprous as sufferers under God's curse is not a matter for surprise. They were cut off from the congregation, and not only forbidden to come within the pale of society, but were compelled to remain without the walls of a city. They might live in a village, but must never approach any one, and must bear conspicuous evidence of their affliction by wearing a torn garment, leaving the head bare and keeping the beard covered. When any one by chance drew near the leper, he must be warned away by the victim crying out, "Unclean, unclean!" Although this was the law, the belief in the infectious nature of leprosy gradually changed to doubting, until the rigorous ordinances finally became so far relaxed that a leper might dwell with his family—though by doing so his associates became unclean—and he was even permitted to appear in a synagogue, provided a place could be provided that would separate him from all others of the congregation.

It sometimes happened that a man was accused of being a leper whose affliction had been improperly diagnosed, but when discovery of the true character of ailment was made, he was required to present himself to a priest and undergo a ceremony of cleansing, after which he put on new clothes, and after bathing and making his offerings for purification, he was relieved of restrictions.

But a man full of leprosy, as was the sufferer whom Christ healed, had no hope; he was a living death, a moving charnel-house, an outcast from heaven as well as of earth, for the seal of sin was upon him; he was the reservoir into which had run the slime, the pollution, the poison of seven generations of iniquity, an example of the contaminating and corrupting effects of unbridled sin. That a man so afflicted, who had been taught by Mosaic law and custom to abandon hope because he was without the pale of even God's mercy, that such a one should seek Jesus and express faith in the Great Physician's power to cleanse, is a thing of itself approaching the marvelous.

In the healing of the leper, Christ gave an exhibition of His disregard for ceremonial law, by touching the afflicted man, but His purpose was probably to especially show His immunity from defilement, His mastery over corruption no less than over disease. His touch was therefore the sign of that purity which incorrupts the corruptible, that cleanses the sinful, and which makes a goodly spirit possess the throne of guilt. It was also an evidence that though leprosy was considered as a type of sin, Christ regarded not the beliefs of the time when they conflicted with His teachings of salvation to all sinners; that sin is not inherited, and beyond the power of forgiveness, but that however corrupt may be the body, the indwelling spirit, if obedient to God, is preserved against the possibility of contamination.

So excited became the people—already agitated with emotion at the miracles wrought—over this last and to them most wonderful manifestation of Messiahship, that the crowds which were immense before now became fairly enormous, and gathered in such volume about Jesus that He found it necessary to withdraw Himself from them again. On the outer shore of that ocean of humanity, the voice of Jesus could not be heard, nor could thousands, perhaps, of the diseased be brought through that closely packed throng to the Gracious Healer. Men had permitted their curiosity to close their ears to instruction, so Christ retired, as He had done before, to give opportunity for the leaven of His teachings to work among the people.

A Great Haul of Fishes.

Having taught in all the synagogues of Galilee, and relieved thousands of sufferers, He seeks rest at the house of His friend Simon Peter, at Capernaum. It appears from the reading of Luke, particularly, that Jesus was not accompanied by either Peter, Andrew, James or John any considerable time or distance on the evangelic journey through Galilee. They had not yet been called to preach the gospel, and being poor men they could not afford to long abandon their fishing vocation ; hence, if they followed the Lord at all it must have been only on that part of His tour through the immediate region about Capernaum.

Upon His return to Peter's home, we can imagine with what hearty welcome He was received ; not only by the four brethren, but by Peter's mother-in-law, and the dispossessed demoniac, and the hundreds of other grateful persons whom He had cured of distressing afflictions. Capernaum must have given Him a grand reception, although if it did none of the gospel writers record the fact. The population may have regarded His dislike of ostentation, His love of simplicity, His self-abnegation, His Godly attributes that hold in no esteem any earthly flattery. But He could have been in the city scarcely an hour before His presence would be discovered, and wondering and expectant crowds would begin gathering about Him. "Jesus has returned, and is at the house of Simon Peter." The glad news flies up and down the streets as fast as tongue can carry it, and into the adjacent parts with all the speed that rider can convey it. How the people pour out of their places ; the merchant from his booth, the mechanic from his shop, the farmer from his field, the clerk from the counting-house ; until market, and exchange, and bazaar, and custom-house, and office are abandoned, all their busy occupants having joined the throng that is moving or has already gathered about Jesus. It is to such a multitude that the Divine Teacher and Holy Healer goes out of Peter's house, because the family are distressed by the pressure, and so He walks down to the shore of Gennesaret. Still the throng presses about Him, one pushing behind another until there is no chance to preach because of the jam that crowds Him fairly into the sea. But their eagerness to hear Him shall not be

disappointed. Seeing two empty fishing boats anchored to the shore, He gets into one and tells Peter to push it a few feet out into water, when being at a convenient distance from His immense audience, He sits in the prow and discourses to the people.

Simon Peter had spent nearly all the preceding night seining the lake, but with such poor success that he had nothing to show for his toil. It was evidently a bad time for fishing; the wind may have been in the east, or a cold spell may have driven the fish into deeper water; or a hot spell may have made them lie



THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.—From the Painting by Jean Jouvenet.

sluggishly on the bottom. Jesus saw the ill-favored condition of the time for fishing, and therefore to work a miracle before the vast crowd that had congregated on the shore, to give a proof of His divine commission, having finished His discourse, He said to Peter, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Or in other words, "Peter, call your assistants and row out into the deep water of the lake and make a cast of your largest net."

But though it was an order from his Divine Master, more than one of whose miraculous performances he had been witness to, yet Simon was so doubtful of success that he replied, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken

nothing; nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net." And half-heartedly the fishermen pulled away some distance from the shore, but still in good view of the wondering spectators, and at Christ's direction they cast the net! Make a sweep as broad as the seine will allow and then draw in. Now steady; why, what makes it so heavy; certainly something very large is in the net. Pull stronger; every hand lend an aid; oh, what a drag; what does it mean? The cause is soon discovered, for as the net is slowly lifted, there are to be seen swirls in the water, then fins, and flouncing tails, and great commotion prove that there is an extraordinary catch. And though hauling with all their strength, and until faces grow red and muscles of bared arms swell under the strain, yet the fishermen begin to rejoice at their wonderful success. But it is too early for rejoicing, for snap goes a thread of the net, and snap goes another thread; the meshes are growing larger and leaving doors open for escape, while the boat is careening under the great weight on one side until it is shipping water, until there is not only danger of losing the fish but of sinking the smack also. To avoid such an extremity, Peter cries out for help to some fishermen who are in another boat near by, and these quickly responding, by their assistance the net and its overflowing contents are saved. The fish are tumbled into the two crafts until under the accumulating weight they sink lower and lower in the water, till the gunwales are almost level with the surface, till another pound must not be added or else the boats will sink. Now carefully row to shore; hold your positions, for the slightest topple will bring the water rushing over the sides, and the catch will yet be lost! But being good fishermen the two crews were also good boatmen, and by perfect seamanship they reached the shore safely with everything saved. Now was the time for rejoicing. But Peter did not rejoice so much over the success of the miraculous haul of fish as he was humiliated by an awakened conscience that revealed his faithlessness; his self-reproachment for doubting the words of Christ, in the implied declaration that a cast of the net would result in a large catch of fish, caused Peter therefore to fall on his knees at Jesus' feet, and to exclaim, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Or, "I am unworthy to be called Thy servant, for I have not shown that fullness of confidence, that faith in Thy divine works, that obedience to Thy wishes, which a true servant owes to a good Master."

But Jesus had no rebuke for the conscience-stricken Simon, to whom He only replied, "Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men." And when they had brought their ships to land, they [Simon, Andrew, John and James] forsook all and followed Him."

The Fierce Bigotry of Rabbinism.

Leaving the lake-side to escape for a time the importunings of curiosity devotees, the discomforts of an inconsiderate rabble, that crowded about Him in a



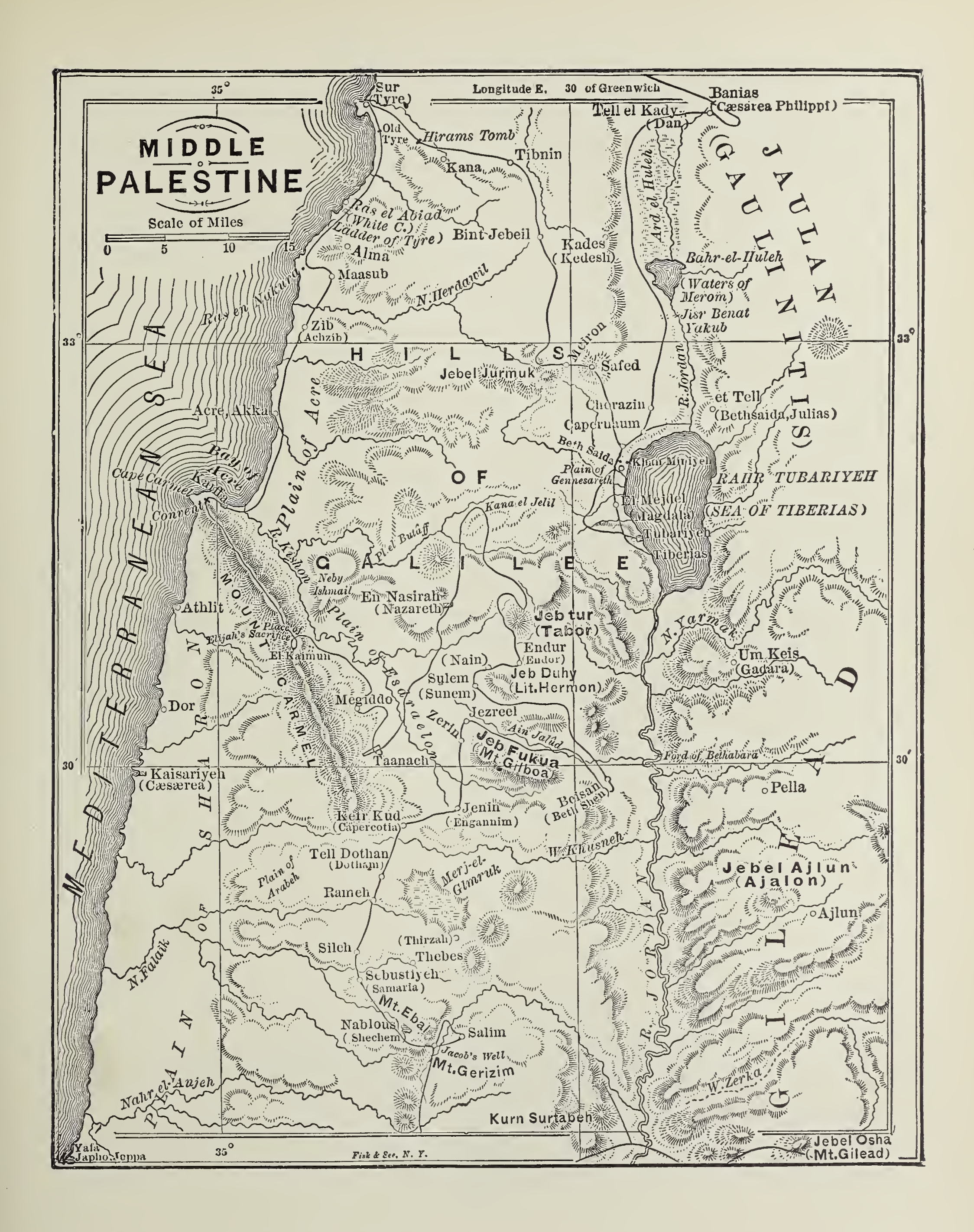
"ARISE, TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK."—Drawn by Bida.

confusion of babbling tongues and pushing, jostling throng, Jesus repaired to a house (most probably Peter's) for an hour of rest. Whether He was permitted to refresh Himself by sleep, or secure a respite for a while from the taxing labors of teaching and healing, is doubtful, for there was no abatement of public excitement, but rather an increase, for as the news of His doings continued to spread, the crowd augmented almost hourly by the arrival of people drawn to Capernaum from all parts of Galilee and Judah. Among those who there sought Jesus were many Pharisees and rabbis from Jerusalem, who came not so much to hear Him preach, or with honest purpose, as to discover how strong had become His influence with the people, and to condemn Him if opportunity offered. While pretending to righteousness and holding all ecclesiastical authority, the Pharisees and rabbis in reality composed the dominant political party, and therefore regarded temporal rather than spiritual supremacy as the highest desideratum, to which end they subordinated all other aspirations. They maintained their exclusive right to direct all religious training, and became insanely jealous of any intrusion upon what they regarded as their own special domain. They dressed in the most impressive habiliments, long robes, betasseled caps and broad prayer-fillets on arms and forehead, walked with measured pace, commonly wore long beards and assumed a look of profoundest wisdom. They not only officiated in religious ceremonies, but representing all learning at the time, they were also public functionaries, judges of criminal as well as civil courts, and were the nation's lawgivers. They were especially jealous of the formularies long prescribed, and punished with severity any infraction of ecclesiastical law. But this rigid literalism was used merely as a cloak to hide their true ambitions, for their real purpose was to increase and perpetuate their worldly powers at the expense of the deluded people, whom they indeed despised.

Learning of the miracles that Jesus was performing in Galilee, and the teachings which He was imparting, that were spreading a liberalizing influence among the Jews to the imperilment of their own authority, the Pharisees and rabbis considered it their duty to interpose such obstacles as the people would permit to a further dissemination of the doctrines of salvation through regeneration. They regarded Jesus as a good man, but not as God : and though He might have the power to do wonders and to teach with a wisdom not found among any of their own sect, this superior qualification only served to increase their hostility and to make them rabid enemies and to institute a persecution of Him which did not cease until they precipitated the tragedy on Golgotha.

An Invalid Shoulders His Mattress.

Jesus had no doubt noted the presence of many Pharisees and rabbis among the crowds that were now besieging Him, and with omniscient wisdom He must


MIDDLE
PALESTINE
Scale of Miles
0 5 10 15
35°
Longitude E. 30 of Greenwich
Sur
(Tyre)
Old Tyre
Hirams Tomb
Kana
Tibnin
Banias
(Cæsarea Philippi)
Tell el Kady
(Dan)
JAULAN
(GAULANITIS)
Ard el Huleh
Ras el Abiad
(White C.)
Ladder of Tyre)
Bint Jebeil
Kades
(Kedesh)
Alma
Maasub
N. Herdawil
Bahr-el-Huleh
(Waters of Merom)
Jisr Benat Yakub
Ras en Nakura
Zib
(Achzib)
33°
HILLS
Meiron
Safed
Jebel Jurmuk
R. Jordan
Acre, Akka
Plain of Acre
Chorazin
Capernaum
et Tell
(Bethsaida, Julias)
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Bay of Acre
Cape Carmel
Kaifa
Convent
Beth Saida
Plain of Gennesareth
OF
BAHR TUBARIYEH
(SEA OF TIBERIAS)
El Mejdel
Magdala
Kana el Jelil
Pl. el Buttauf
Tubariyeh
Tiberias
R. Kishon
GALILEE
MOUNT CARMEL
Neby Ishmail
En Nasirah
(Nazareth)
Athlit
Jeb tur
(Tabor)
N. Yarmuk
Place of Elijah's Sacrifice
Plain of Esdraelon
El Kaimun
Endur
(Endor)
(Nain)
Um Keis
(Gadara)
Sulem
(Sunem)
Jeb Duhy
(Lit. Hermon)
SHARON
Dor
Megiddo
Jezreel
Zerin
Ain Jalud
Jeb Fukua
(Mt. Gilboa)
Taanach
30′
Ford of Bethabara
Kaisariyeh
(Cæsærea)
Pella
Jenin
(Engannim)
Beisan
(Beth Shean)
Kefr Kud
(Capercotia)
W. Khusneh
Tell Dothan
(Dothan)
Plain of Arabeh
Merj-el-Ghruk
Jebel Ajlun
(Ajalon)
Rameh
Ajlun
GILEAD
(Thirzah)
Sileh
Thebes
Sebustiyeh
(Samaria)
N. Falaik
PLAIN OF SHARON
Mt. Ebal
R. JORDAN
Nablous
(Shechem)
Salim
Jacob's Well
Mt. Gerizim
W. Zerka
Nahr el Aujeh
Kurn Surtabeh
Yafa
Japho Joppa
Fisk & See, N. Y.
Jebel Osha
(Mt. Gilead)

have foreseen the fierce attitude they would assume and the open hostility that would terminate with His death. But if He did, this foreshadowed doom could not change His purpose, any more than curses of men can chain a thunderbolt, or the wrath of the sinful can dim the lustre of the sun.

When, therefore, the crowds pressed about the door of His lodging place, in response to their desires Jesus preached to them, probably from an upper window, making His discourse as fiery with condemnation of the base hypocrisies of the ruling classes as He had done before.

While Jesus was thus preaching, four men were seen on the outer boundary of that immense audience, carrying a palsied patient on a pallet and trying to make a way through the throng to the house ; but with all their efforts the multitude stood so thickly massed that an opening could not be made. Seeing the futility of the attempt to force a way through the crowd, the four carried their charge around to the rear of the house and by means of a ladder ascended to the top. Nearly all dwellings in Palestine have a flat roof, to which the occupants repair after sunset in the heated season for fresh air, and where they sit until long hours in the night enjoying the cool breezes. These roofs, especially those of the cheaper houses, are made of alternate layers of earth and straw, pressed down so compactly as to shed rain ; but they need frequent repairing and are easily removed. The four men, after reaching the housetop with their helpless charge, set immediately to work making an opening in the roof, and succeeding in this they procured ropes which they attached to the bed, by which the poor palsied sufferer was lowered to the floor where Christ stood. What matchless hope ; what persistent faith ; what greatness of belief ! He had certainly heard how Jesus had healed the leper, and though taught to believe that palsy was also a type of sin, the victim now felt that divine mercy was above sin, and therefore above the limitations of the law against uncleanness. And with this thought, the sufferer's hopes are inspired until he insists on being taken into the presence of the Divine Physician. Jesus saw the great faith of the helpless man, and as a reward for his persistence, the Holy Healer turned from the great audience for a moment to speak health to the afflicted one, saying, "Son, be of good cheer ; thy sins be forgiven thee." Whether the sufferer were a lad, or a man ; whether the salutation indicates the youthfulness of the patient, or was a term of endearment ; or implies an early state in the new birth of regeneration, is not material, since the final result bore triumphant testimony to the power of Jesus.

There were many Pharisees and rabbis within the sound of Christ's voice, who, finding an opportunity to criticise, now began to condemn Him for assuming the prerogatives of Jehovah ; but they were afraid to openly make their accusations before the crowd that were witnesses of the noble and Godly deeds done. In their hearts therefore they said : "Who is this man that He assumes the power,

which God alone has, to forgive sin! Is He not a blasphemer? Is He not therefore worthy to be stoned to death?" But though these words of condemnation were not uttered, Jesus felt them, for lips could make no revelation to Him, so He turns upon the fault-finders and says to them: "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts, whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?' But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He said to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, 'Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way unto thine house.' And immediately he arose, took up the bed whereon he lay, and went forth before them all, and departed to his own house, glorifying God."

What a confounding of the blasphemers, what a rebuke to their vain pretendings, their mockery of righteousness, their bigoted intolerance. Seeing such a manifestation of divine power pouring out its gracious influence from a fountain of infinite mercy, of compassion, of love, it would appear that human nature could not be so base as to reject the evidence. But greed, avarice, pride of self, ambition, change the currents of a natural benevolence until it wastes itself; then Satan supplies the reservoir thus emptied by a pouring in of hellish distillments that drown the soul. And so it was with the Pharisees and rabbis; to have accepted Christ, or acknowledge His authority from God, would have been to surrender their own power, to have renounced their own ambitions, to have condemned themselves as hypocrites before the people. Instead, therefore, they set about concocting plans to circumvent Christ by bringing Him into disrepute as a dangerous teacher, who was offending against the law and violating immemorial custom, and denouncing the faiths and beliefs of the nation. That they finally succeeded in their impious designs is the one great and everlasting reproach, the stain and stigma most foul and ineffaceable, the iniquity and atrocity most horrible, of which humanity stands condemned.



CHAPTER XV.

CALLED FROM THE CUSTOM HOUSE.

CAPERNAUM, as already described, was a city of great commercial importance, having risen to a position of first rank in Galilee by reason of the advantages of its location. Being situated on the boundary of the two tetrarchies of Antipas and Philip, and on the commercial highway between Damascus, of Cœle-Syria, and Ptolemais, or St. Jean d'Acre, on the Phœnician coast, the city was made a seat of customs, or port of entry. Here duties were levied upon all goods entering either way, and the commerce was so considerable that the number of customs officers, called *publicans*, must have been a dozen, or even more. The term *publican*, however, was applied to tax and toll-gatherers generally, from the office of collecting very small bridge-tolls to the treasuryship of districts. But the calling was, in all its grades, regarded as one of reproach, especially among the Jews, who considered publicans as the chiefs of sinners. They were looked upon, and not without cause, as a set of rapacious plunderers, if not as criminals of a yet baser nature, and any Jew who accepted the office was at once excommunicated and his family were held in disgrace. Nevertheless, bad as was the general character of publicans, there were some who, despite the bitter prejudices against them, might be considered as honorable men ; it is not only thieves that make up the population of jails, for innocence often falls into company with the vicious.

In all Galilee there was no one who had not heard of, if they had not seen, the works of Jesus ; and in Capernaum every person must have now become familiar alike with His teachings, His miracles, and His fame. If great men came up from Jerusalem, and remote parts of Judah, and from Northern Decapolis, to hear Christ preach, it is quite impossible to believe that there was any civil officer in the city where the greater number of His miracles were performed that kept aloof, in ignorance of the wondrous MAN whose fame had spread over all Palestine. Among His audience must therefore have been many publicans, and all the customs officers, whose duties brought them in daily contact with foreigners as well as with their own people, which gave them better opportunity to learn the effect of Christ's teachings, and the extent of His influence. Were not the publicans, hated as they were, dishonest as they were, ostracised as they were, quite as likely, and more likely, to be convicted under the preaching and wondrous works of Jesus, as many others who helped to make up the great crowds that flocked about Him ? They had every reason to accept Him ; they must have



MATTHEW IS CALLED.—Photograph of Celebrated Painting. (263)

been impressed by His indifference to social distinctions and proscriptions; they must have been drawn to Him by His sympathy for all unfortunates, and by His refusal to hold an entire caste under condemnation because of the sins of a few. And lastly, those who felt the injustice of Jewish prejudice, and who, despite the accusations against them, were yet leading honest lives, must have rejoiced at His teachings, and by His works believed on Him as the promised Messiah.

Some of these publicans, and certainly one of them, had become thus impressed and had probably given some intimation, either to Christ or the four disciples, of his sincere belief, for the Apostles tell us that, "As He [Jesus] passed by He saw a man named Matthew, also called Levi, the son of Alpheus, a publican, sitting at the receipt of customs, and said unto him, 'Follow Me.' And he left all, rose up, and followed Him."

Levi (Matthew) as the name implies, was of the priestly tribe, and his acceptance of the post of collector was therefore considered by the Jews as an offence not only against good morals, but an odium on his birthright, and the contempt in which he was held was accordingly the more harsh and bitter. His call by Jesus was therefore a mark of Christ's disfavor of national prejudices and it was made to serve as a proof that all social conditions were upon the same plane, the highest having no pre-eminence above the lowest, in the sight of God, who requires only that men shall renounce sin, ask with sincerity of heart the Divine forgiveness, and live in righteousness before the higher, but more liberal than the Jewish, laws which Jesus came to establish.

Feast at the House of Matthew.

That Matthew felt himself supremely honored by the call of our Lord, and that in elation of spirit he desired to give some evidence of his appreciation of his exaltation to so glorious a dignity, we could believe even if there were no record of the means used to give an outward expression of his joy. But the giving of a feast to his Master, in celebration of the honor bestowed by his elevation to discipleship, would excite our surprise but for the admirable lesson which the act served to impart. Christ was now not only teaching by word, but by example; not only setting aside the old, but substituting a new order; not only decrying the prejudices and false principles of the Jews, but presenting objective forms of His aversion to all manner of injustice, however fortified by long observance. It was an act intended no doubt as a rebuke to the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, scribes and rabbis, whose teachings were in direct contrast with those of Christ, and a prefigurement of that universal brotherhood which was to come when true righteousness should prevail.

When the Pharisees saw Jesus at the feast which Matthew had prepared, and how He fellowshiped with all publicans who were present, they of course opened



CHRIST HEALING ALL MANNER OF DISEASES.

their mouths with bitter criticisms, and sought even to antagonize the followers of Jesus with those who had been baptized by John. The answer which Christ made to these carpers, whose religion was worn on the sleeve rather than in the heart; whose righteousness was in ceremonials rather than in the performance of good deeds; whose sympathies were with the favored rather than with the unfortunate, while gentle, was yet such a caustic reproach that their pride and haughtiness withered under it. Said He, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; but go ye and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Or, paraphrased in our modern tongue, "A physician does not prescribe for the well, but for those who are sick: as the Son of God I came into the world to prevail with sinners, the spiritually sick, to mingle with them, to teach them the way of salvation, to save them. I have not come to spend the precious time of my self-exile in preaching to the righteous, or to those who are so set in their own pride of vain self-righteousness that they despise all others. Search the prophecies and teachings of Hosea, vi. 6: 'For I desire mercy and not sacrifices; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.' Prescribed forms are mockeries except they be accompanied by holy acts; ostentation, whether in actions or in worship, is repugnant to the spirit of true righteousness, for God regards only the merciful, the compassionate, the charitable, and these He accepts whether their offerings be made on altars before men, or by prayer in the retirement of one's closet, or wherever the heart is lifted up in homage to God."

The Apostles Chosen and the Church of Christ Founded.

How long Jesus remained preaching and healing in Capernaum, on this visit, we are not given to know; nor is the sequence of His acts revealed by the Gospel writers. We can only conjecture, and group the incidents of His ministry in the order which appears to us as they most likely occurred. But the arrangement is arbitrary, rather than the result of conclusions founded upon specific information; fortunately, it is of small importance to know positively the exact succession, unless the knowledge would afford us the means of determining the duration of His ministry, and the unfolding, by revelation, of His Messianic powers.

After the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, over the call of a publican to fellowship, it is probable that events had so shaped themselves—the opposition, ay, hostility, of the rabbinical sect had become so pronounced, while the multitudes that followed Him and the numbers who accepted Him, had grown so great—that Jesus considered the time had now come for the establishment of His Church. Heretofore His teachings had involved an exposure of the hypocrisy of the Pharisaic sect, while inciting the people to a purer and holier conception of God's mercy, and the essential conditions of salvation. He had therefore drawn

many away from the old conservatism, dogmatism, and ritualism of the ruling priesthood, but had not yet provided means for the blending together in one common and perpetual union of His followers. Around Him they had gathered and looked to Him for direction ; but He could not be always with them, and appointments must therefore be made against the day when new leadership would be necessary. Besides, the number who sought His instruction and divine aid had become so great that He could not minister to them all, while other fields needed sowers and reapers. As an army is made up of divisions under sub-officers, with only one supreme directing head, so Jesus found it necessary to commission Apostles to aid Him in preaching the gospel to all people, and to give them power and authority, in His name, to perform like wonders.

Trying Conditions of Apostleship.

He had no doubt made a selection of the twelve, who were to serve as evangelists in bringing the world to repentance, some time before their actual ordination, but He had not found it advisable to name them until the auspicious occasion arrived to make their public designation most impressive. The qualifications for apostleship were severely self-sacrificing, requiring a devotion so great as made every consideration of self, beyond the final reward, subordinate to the Divine purpose of converting sinners. Those who accepted the holy office had not only to renounce their worldly pursuits and possessions, but also to undergo hardships from which any heart unsustained by Divine grace might well shrink. There was not only the rugged path to tread, the aching feet and tired body, but insults and contumely of bigoted Pharisaism to bear, and lastly punishments and martyrdom to suffer. What noble souls, what devoted hearts, what infinite faith and love, to surrender the comforts and endure the afflictions ; to choose the condemnation of men rather than court their applause ; to renounce the world rather than seek its favor ; to wed themselves to perpetual poverty rather than stand in the high esteem of the rich ; and, best of all, to sacrifice all, that they might save sinners, by directing them in the way of salvation, and for no reward save the promise of a share in that kingdom to which they should become heirs thereafter.

The Prayer on Mount Hattin.

Before every great act Christ committed Himself to prayer. Not, however, in the synagogue, to make public His petitions, nor among the crowds that besieged Him, that He might imitate the ostentatious righteousness of the rabbis ; nor in the streets, that He might make a display of His devotion like the Pharisees. But He sought the deep seclusion of the wilderness, or the lonely retirement of the mountain, where creation holds uninterrupted communion with God ; where howling storm, whispering wind, and rustling tree-top chant the doxologies of nature.

After praying to His Father all the night, when the flush of morning began to flame the surrounding hills and peep down into the sombre valleys, Jesus descended from His retreat, which is supposed to have been Mount Hattin, and met the crowd who were awaiting His coming. But as He drew near the multitude He beckoned to some of His followers, who may have been already made acquainted with His purpose, and upon twelve He conferred the exalted honor of apostleship, "And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples; and they came unto Him, and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles; and He ordained them that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sickness and to cast out devils."

There may have been many applicants for the great honor of discipleship, but they were rejected as Christ rejected the overture of the scribe who, seeking Him, said: "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." Jesus saw that this man, a rabbi, schooled as he was in the indulgences of the priesthood, was unfitted for the severities which His apostles must endure, and that under such hardships his faith would surrender to the weaknesses of the flesh; so Christ replied, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

Another candidate for the honor of apostleship besought the Lord to first give him permission to bury his father, after which he would become a devout follower, but Jesus answered, "Follow Me; let the dead bury their dead." The order therefore was to let no earthly consideration intervene to prevent an immediate acceptance of the call. For the dead, God giveth a care, but the sinners are like scattered sheep which, if the shepherd does not speedily find and bring together, some wander off so far that they are forever lost.

So we are made to understand by these answers which Christ made to two applicants for the honor of appointment as evangelists in His name, that those whom He selected were distinguished among their fellows as men possessing the most courageous faith; as followers who thoroughly appreciated the hardships which they would have to undergo; as apostles who felt that no earthly glory can be greater than that which crowns the brow of mercy, and no joy so infinite as that which proceeds from devotion to God and deliverance from sin of their fellow-men.

The manner of selection, or the ceremony of consecration, if any was performed, is not described by the Gospel writers. As Christ had nothing but rebukes for the ritualism of the Jews, it is hardly possible that the act of ordination was accompanied by any ceremonies, but that the appointment was made, as both Mark and Luke relate, by simply choosing, and that the apostles being called to be ever with Him, they were afterwards instructed in their duties. Those who were thus summoned included the five who were first drawn to Jesus;



LYDDA, ON THE ROAD BETWEEN JOPPA AND JERUSALEM, AS IT NOW APPEARS.—From *The Christian Herald.*

Simon Peter and Andrew; John and James, sons of Zebedee; Philip, Nathanael or Bartholomew, Matthew, James the Less, Jude, also called Thaddeus, Thomas, or Didymus the twin, Judas, of Kerioth, and Simon the Zealot.

Peter and Andrew were partners of John and James in the occupation of fishermen, and the four had been among the first disciples of the Baptist, and therefore they were better prepared to enter at once upon the duties to which they had now been called.

Philip was also from the city of Bethsaida, from whence came John and James, and was probably a disciple of the Baptist, and hence was very early impressed with faith in the Messiahship of Jesus.

Nathanael, or Bartholomew, the son of Tholmai, was from Cana, and as already described, he may be reckoned as the fifth disciple.

James the Less is supposed to have been a brother of Jesus, as was also Jude, but whether they were brothers or cousins of Christ is a question that will always remain in dispute, for by comparing the four Gospels and Acts 1, they appear both as brothers and cousins.

Matthew, having been a receiver of customs, was familiar with clerical duties and probably had a liberal education. His gospel is the oldest, and the only one of the four that was written in Syro-Chaldaic, or old Hebrew, being apparently intended especially for the Jews, to whom his appeals appear more explicitly to be directed.

Thomas is called Didymus by John, the word meaning *a twin*, from which tradition represents him as a twin brother of Jesus; but if we accept this belief, Thomas becomes confounded with Jude. More reliable commentators contend that he was born in Antioch, and generally regard him as a man of some learning, who after the death of Christ became a missionary in the far east, and suffered martyrdom at Edessa, in Northern Mesopotamia.

Simon Zelotes is also made to appear as a brother to Jesus, but without any proper reason. He is also called Simon the Canaanite, the term *Zelotes* being applied to distinguish his fierce zealousy for the Mosaic ritual, and his adhesion to the faction known as Zealots. He was a Galilean, but the place of his birth or residence is not given.

Judas Iscariot was from Kerioth, or Kartha, of Galilee. He was an early follower of the Baptist, and though there seems to have been some distrust of his sincerity, yet he was made treasurer of the twelve and entrusted with all contributions made to the apostles, and the distribution of the same among the poor. His character is hard to define, but will be treated of hereafter in connection with the betrayal of His Master.

And these are the twelve whom Jesus chose from among the great number (let us believe) of applicants for His favor. Not rich men, nor rabbis

distinguished for scholarship and influence ; nor members of the royal household whose power might avail so much. Not these ; but men chosen rather for their obscurity in the walks of life than their prominence among men. For their trustfulness, their earnestness, and their unquenchable faith born of conviction ; men who would make the surest foundation pillars for supporting a new religion founded upon the holiest attributes of human nature ; a democracy of fellowship, a freedom of conscience, a republic in which all are sovereigns under one law, "Love ye one another."

Peter the Hermit was called from the monastery to become the apostle of the Crusade ; Cincinnatus called from the field to save the Roman consul and his army, and thus to save Rome ; Joan of Arc called from her milking and sheep-tending to lead the armies of France ; John the Baptist called from the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord—notable examples in the world's history of the power that lies quiescent among the lowly and obscure until called into action by God. And so Jesus, knowing the hearts and capacities of all men, called His apostles from among the obscure ; from among fishermen, toll-collectors, laborers ; men who perhaps were low in the esteem of the rich and vainglorious, yet nobler for their poor social station, because pride had not been enthroned in their hearts, and because the doors of their souls stood open to receive the Bridegroom married to the world of suffering and sin.



A DRAGOMAN.—From Photograph.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BLESSEDS OF MOUNT HATTIN.

SEVEN miles west of Tiberias, rising out of a plain of great fertility, are two inconsiderable elevations, one about sixty and the other some forty feet above the lake level, which have long borne the local name of "Horns of Hattin." In this locality, beyond the gorge of Magdala, are the cliffs of Arbela, to which the Zealots fled when pursued by Herod, and in the caves of which they were so mercilessly slaughtered. From the peaks of Hattin, which derive their name from a village at the base, a magnificent view of a wide range of country may be had, bordered on the east by a blue expanse of water marking the sea of Galilee. It is a retired district and withal so beautiful that tradition, supported by appearances, marks one of the hills as the site where Jesus ordained His Apostles and delivered to them His instructions preparatory to sending them out to preach the gospel which He there declared. Sunlight could do no more than it did for that mountain on the day our horses struggled to the top of it, and neither time nor eternity can dim that landscape in our memories. Standing on its highest peak we read from our Bible, "The Beatitudes."

From Matthew's account it appears that upon descending from the mountain, on the morning following a night spent in prayer, Jesus saw a great multitude assembled on the plain below awaiting His coming; whereupon, not being willing yet to discourse to them, He returned to the peak, followed by His disciples, to whom He then delivered his sublime sermon on the requirements of the new gospel dispensation.

"And seeing the multitude, He went up into a mountain; and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him, and He opened His mouth and taught them," etc.

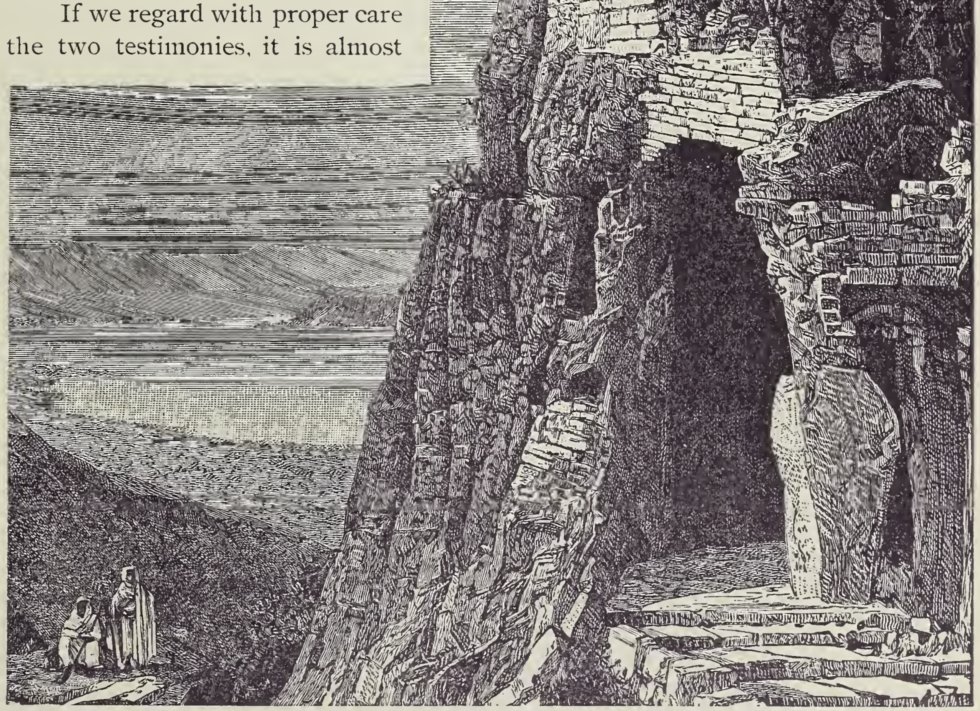
Luke's record of the events leading up to the sermon of blessings differs materially from that of Matthew's, to such an extent that it is believed by many Jesus delivered two sermons of substantially the same import, the first to His disciples on the mountain, and then returning to the multitude below He healed the sick that had been brought, and followed these deeds of mercy with a sublime discourse on the duties which we owe to one another, and the declaration of a new covenant to supersede the old theocratic form which recognized force and ritual rather than moral obligations.

After the appointment of His disciples, Luke says: "And He came down with them and stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great

multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear Him, and be healed of their diseases ; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits ; and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him ; for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all.

"And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, Blessed," etc.

If we regard with proper care the two testimonies, it is almost



CAVES IN THE CLIFFS OF ARBELA, NEAR THE TRADITIONAL SITE WHERE JESUS ORDAINED HIS DISCIPLES.

apparent that the seeming discrepancies, not in spirit but in form of statement only, are the result of recording the facts some time after their occurrence.

Matthew is always more explicit, probably because of his training in clerical occupation, and therefore gives us a better report of the sermon than Luke, who probably wrote from memory sometime afterwards. It may be also that Matthew reported some things which Luke failed to remember, and also that Luke narrated portions of the discourse which Matthew had forgotten, so that the two accounts may be properly assimilated into one complete record without violence to the narration.

The Sunburst of a New Dispensation.

The Mosaic law was promulgated from peak of mountain laboring in the throes of a mighty eruption, belching up fire and smoke until a pall of cloud veiled from wondering eyes below the face of God, but whose awful presence was made manifest by lightning flash and thunderous boom, as He graved on stone His ten commandments.

In Christ we behold the second coming, not to destroy but to fulfill: not with threatenings of wrath, but with assurances of mercy and of God's love; not to prescribe new formularies of worship, but to establish a church in which there should be no other requirement for membership than love, whose creed should be love, whose precepts and practices and ambitions should be love.

To give form to His new covenant with the world, Jesus instructed His disciples in the essence as well as in the substance of the new dispensation, in which blessings were made the rewards for afflictions, in which poverty was enrichment, misfortune was great gain, persecution was advantageous, execrations by the sinful was glorification of the righteous. In these teachings Jesus not only contravened the old and thoroughly ingrained belief that all manner of ill fortune was an evidence of God's displeasure, but declared that afflictions should rather be accounted as blessings, for it is not by prosperity but by tribulation that we are brought to seek God.

And thus Jesus gives His divine law, not by threats, commands or prohibitions; but, recognizing the leaven of good that is in all persons, He seeks to make that leaven an active principle by an appeal to our better nature, by crowning the world with benedictions, and sowing the earth with blessings, and filling all hearts with beatifications. To His disciples, therefore, He pronounced these great beatitudes and rewards:

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.



SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

"Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

These were special blessings of the righteous, the promises of great reward for purity of heart and meekness and long-suffering under trial. But though the apostles were filled with faith they had not yet been proved in righteousness by bitter ordeals of reviling and tribulations that were to come. He therefore admonished them, by presenting striking examples, against faltering in their allegiance to God and growing lukewarm in the ministry to which they had been elevated. Said He to them: "Ye are the salt of the earth." Your mission is to preserve, and so long as you are firm and unyielding in righteousness, and devoted to the gospel which I have now declared, you will be the salt that shall save men. But if you lose your

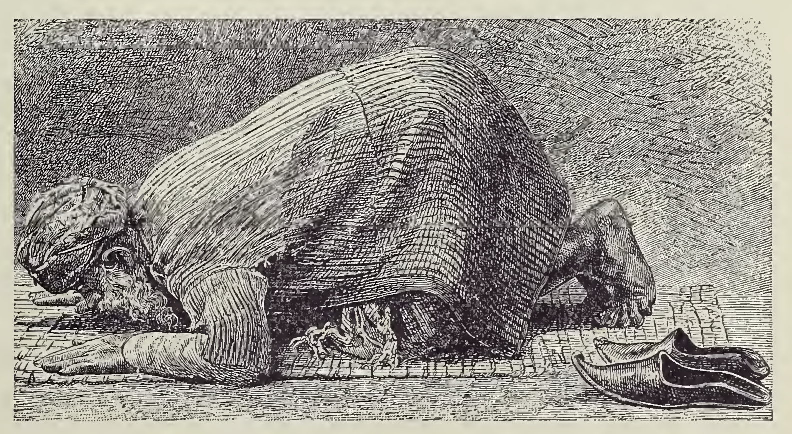
faith so will you lose all power for good and become worthless because of failing to exercise the special advantages given you as apostles.

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Let your understanding and teachings enlighten all men; let your good deeds, your devotion to God, your sympathy for the sinful, keep you ever enthusiastic in the work of bringing souls to repentance. Let your works be as conspicuous before men as a city on a hill-top; so merciful, so pious, so instructive, that multitudes will seek you, will embrace you, will call others to follow, and lastly will glorify God. Thus may you be likened unto salt that preserves, and a light that illumines every path, and a city to which all eyes look with admiration and delight.

Love your enemies, bless them that wrong you, return kindness for despitefulness, practice charity, be always merciful, judge not harshly but with sympathy, do not undertake to discover faults in others until you have purged yourself of evil, for men, no more than trees, can bring forth good fruit unless the virtue of purity be in them. Figs do not grow on thorn-bushes, nor grapes on brambles, neither does righteousness proceed from an impure heart, for evil begets evil, and godliness produces its like. Men, again, like trees, must be estimated by their fruits, and not by their pretendings. The thriftiest appearing tree may not flower, or, if blossoming, may not yield good fruit; so the most ostentatious man, full of promises, and loud protestations, and long prayers, may be a hypocrite at heart and work no deeds of either mercy or charity. Many persons get credit for making generous gifts that are paid out of other people's pockets, but God sees the pulse and promptings of every man's heart and will reward with justice. Offerings to God are not acceptable as atonements for sin, as long taught by the Pharisees, for it is necessary that deep contrition and sincere repentance be first felt before a sin-offering can be made that will procure the Divine forgiveness. And actual commission of an offence against moral laws is not more worthy of punishment, in the eyes of God, than the instigation or impulse to do a wrong which is only prevented through fear of retribution, for the full magnitude of sin is in the prompting of an evil heart. In short, there is but one God, who regards all, who loves all, and who holds all, whether prince or peasant, master or slave, poor or rich, to a common accountability, making the world a grand democracy of man, with no distinctions save alone it be between the righteous and the sinful. But even between these there is no difference in their worldly prosperity, for God bestows His favors alike upon all, visiting the unjust with all the natural blessings of rain and sunshine, and pleasure, and gain, that He gives to the just and virtuous; but in the last day, when concerns of this life are yielded up, the good shall triumph over the wicked by rewards given them that shall be withheld from the undeserving.

And Christ condemned the long and empty prayers of the Pharisees, who made public exhibitions of their devotions by repairing many times each day to the synagogues, or to prominent street corners where their broad phylacteries would attract the attention of passers by, and there offered up petitions in loud and long protracted voices in order that they might gain credit for being extremely righteous. This was not only hypocrisy, but irreverence and vulgarity; an offence against true piety, an insult to God. Public prayer was not forbidden, for Jesus Himself participated in devotions before congregations, but ostentation and vainglorying, and self-righteousness which distinguished Pharisaic invocations, were reprobated. Prayer is not acceptable to God except it be the expression of the heart's holy desires, and nowhere can the heart so well seek God as in private. Therefore Jesus said to His disciples, "Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him. After this manner therefore pray ye:





MODES OF PUBLIC PRAYER IN EASTERN COUNTRIES.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom

come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.''

No man before or since ever set up so short a prayer as a formula embracing all that we have need to ask of God. There is no request for the Lord to prosper us, to give us health, to defend us against our enemies, to help us in worldly matters, to give us wisdom, to bless our ambitions and undertakings. None of these are asked for, because '' Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before you ask Him.'' This form was prescribed by Jesus as the petition which ought ever to abide in our hearts, a formulary expressive of our desires to approach nearer the example of true righteousness, an orison that ought to proceed from our hearts continually, for by it we express our longing for more perfect grace, and our glorification of God.

As a peroration to His divinely sublime sermon of instruction to His disciples, Jesus added solemn words of warning: '' Enter in through the strait gate, for narrow is the way, and rough is the path with self-denial and renouncements of the world's vanities, that leads to eternal life, so that few find it. But broad is the gate and way, gilded and bestrewn with worldly pleasures and allurements to vice, so that many enter and pursue their way to destruction. Many will in the last day call upon Me and say, Lord, Lord, did we not own Thy mighty works, and confess Thee as the Messiah? But I shall answer, I know you not; and the spirit of true righteousness was not in you, for it is not sufficient to acknowledge Me as Master, but to do the will of My Father, who is in heaven. Therefore will I say, Depart from Me, because ye were workers of iniquity. Take warning, for even some of you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say.''

A Warrior's Servant Cured.

'' Now, when He had ended all His sayings in the audience of the people, He entered into Capernaum.''

What a triumphal procession it must have been which followed Jesus as He returned to the city, and what a spectacle! Going before the multitude must have been the Lord and His disciples, while behind, strung out in lengthened line, were thousands of handsomely-clothed Pharisees, and scribes, and rabbis, walking side by side, no doubt, with the poor and the ragged, and the diseased. Some on donkeys, some on camels, some on horses, and the feeble, paralyzed, deformed, demoniacal, carried on cots, on pallets, or on the shoulders of their strong friends. Nor must we believe that Christ gave over His administration to the sick and disabled even while on the return journey. His sympathy and matchless love would not allow Him to withhold His healing virtue from the

suffering. And so indeed are we told. The crowd pressed about Him in such numbers and with such persistency that He took no time to eat, but continued His work of relief until His energies were so drained that His friends feared He would fail from prostration. How untiring, how energetic, how gentle, how powerful in the works of mercy. The world has never seen another example of such charity, humility and godliness!

Shortly after His return to Capernaum a Centurion, or captain of the city garrison, whose uprightness and devotedness had served to endear him to the



RUINS OF THE VILLAGE OF NAIN, SHOWING PRESENT APPEARANCE OF THE PLACE.

people, came to Jesus to seek His divine aid in restoring to health his favorite servant. How long the servant had been sick, or with what ailment he was suffering, Luke fails to tell us, but that he was so seriously ill that his death was expected is affirmed. Feeling his unworthiness, as a Gentile, to approach Jesus, the Centurion sent to Him some of the Jewish elders with a request that He would come down and heal the dying servant. And when the messengers

presented their petition they also described to Jesus the worthiness of the applicant by saying, "For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue." By this statement it is shown that the Centurion was not only a rich man but that he had either become converted to or was in strong sympathy with the Jewish faith, and that he also believed on Jesus as the anointed of God. To the appeal Jesus responded by going at once toward the Centurion's house, but as He drew near and His coming was announced the Centurion sent others of his friends to say, "Lord, trouble not Thyself; for I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." To this great exhibition of faith in the power of Jesus the Centurion added yet another evidence by defining his supreme authority over the soldiers under his command, and drawing a contrast between that small authority and the absolutism and supreme mastership of Jesus over all the things of this world.

Turning to the people who had followed Him Jesus said, "I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." And with the words, "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee," Jesus dismissed the friends of the Centurion, and then He turned back to renew His preaching and ministrations to the multitude. But the Centurion's faith had its reward, for though Jesus did not enter his house, or go beyond the place where the messengers stopped Him, yet on that instant the servant was restored; Christ had spoken the word and the servant was healed.

Resurrection Day for One.

"And it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him and much people."

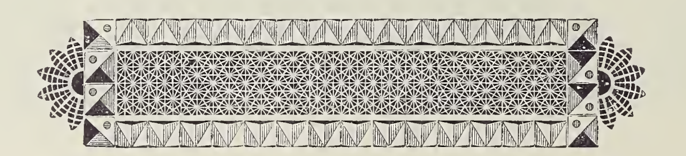
This little village is a few miles south of Nazareth, on the northwestern edge of Little Hermon Mountain. The country about is much broken until it reaches down to the plain of Esdraelon. From this plain the ground rises abruptly into cliffs and caves, which serve as sepulchres, and were so used in the time of Christ.

As Jesus and the multitude of His followers approached the village they saw a procession slowly filing out of the gate, bearing away for burial the dead body of a widow's son. The crowd that followed and the evidence of deep grief shown by so many, go far to prove that the dead son had either been a very popular young man or his mother was greatly loved and very influential. Perhaps he was just at the threshold of manhood and gave promise of great usefulness, and may have been the sole support of a widowed mother. How hard it is to surrender life when it is in the unfolding of manhood; how easy to lay down the burdens that oppress old age; how great the contrast between entering upon life's duties and going out after the finished work. But our sympathies grow to the fullest at



THE WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE.

the sight of a poor woman who, having lost her husband, is stricken with a second overwhelming affliction in the loss of an only son, the last prop to her life destroyed, the last link that bound her to family broken, the last hope, ambition and prospect of reward for long hours, and days, and years of loving, motherly care, crushed. And if our sympathies are great, how can we measure the compassion that Jesus felt at the sight of such sorrow, at the overflowing well of grief, the shattered idol and the broken heart? "And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not." Perhaps she was in advance of the pall-bearers, for after thus speaking a consoling word He touched the bier and bade the bearers put down the body, and they obeyed. Did the weeping mother or any of the mourners know that it was Jesus who had thus interrupted the funeral? If not, they must have thought him possessed, or were awed by His majesty, or overcome by His gracious, kindly and compassionate bearing. When the bier had been put down to await His further command or action, Jesus stood over the body, and with majestic and authoritative call said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" Forthwith the fetters of death were broken, the heart knocked at all the silenced arteries and set them into action again, the whitened cheeks and pallid lips took on the blush of health, and muscles became responsive again to the call of the awakened brain, "And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." How glad would we be to know what were his first words. Did he ask for his mother? did he with confused sense express wonder at his situation? did he tell his experience in the world of death? did he recognize Christ? But on these points the apostles are silent; they only tell us that Jesus delivered the restored boy to his overjoyed mother, and that the miracle was followed by a glorification of God. No wonder that there came a fear upon all who witnessed this manifestation of Divine power. They had seen Jesus heal the diseased, but physicians had relieved the sick also; and though the Master healed by touch or word, on the instant, where physicians had failed after months or years of effort, yet there was a seeming relation between the powers of the two, indistinct, but yet appreciative. But the raising of the dead was through a power equal to that of creation: occult, impenetrable, inexplicable, godly; and with this feeling the people declared "that a great prophet is risen amongst us; and that God hath visited His people. And this rumor of Him [Jesus] went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about."



CHAPTER XVII.

POOR MAGDALENE'S TEARS ILLUMINED.

JESUS probably returned to Capernaum after the great miracle at Nain, though the circumstance about to be related may have occurred in that village. The gospels are silent as to His deeds while at Nain, though it is scarcely believable that He concluded the ministry there with a single act of mercy. Having raised the dead to life, He must have made that great deed a beginning of merciful acts in the village where He was certain now to meet with favor. But the record is so broken and incomplete that we cannot follow Him in the mighty works which He performed. What a blessing to civilization is the daily press, and the restless activity of energetic news-gathers who make it the medium through which we view the doings of the Christianized world. Oh, if in the days of Christ every town in Palestine had been blessed with a daily, or weekly, or monthly newspaper, how much the world would have been benefited by full and accurate reports of Jesus' doings. But there were no types or printing presses or active reporters to herald events in those days. No means of communication except by word of mouth, no records except the few made by scribes, no books except those in manuscript, which only one in ten thousand persons was able to read. Small wonder then that the gospel accounts of our Saviour's works and life are so brief. Nothing save momentous reasons, absolute authenticity of the wonders performed, made even a fragmentary record of them by the disciples possible. Not that all the things written by scribes in the early centuries are true, but because the New Testament bears, by reason of its sublime, aye, divine, images, teachings, history, revelations, the impress of inspiration, even without the corroborating testimonies of the time and of the ages.

Banquet in Honor of Jesus.

Whether in Nain or Capernaum, or other place in Galilee, Jesus had become known to all the people, so that sinners, as well as the converted, followed Him wherever He went. The contempt expressed by vain-glorious rabbis and Pharisees could not repress the faith of those who saw great miracles performed, and the rigid requirements of the Mosaic Law and the autocratic domination of a priestly but intensely worldly class could not restrain the noble impulses, born of conviction, that brought even Pharisees to show favor to the Holy One. More than one of this haughty sect had so far humbled himself in the eyes of his fellows as to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. And now comes another, named Simon, who

sends an invitation to our Lord asking His company at a dinner which was to be given probably in His honor.

What was Simon's motive in sending this invitation? Why, it was like insulting his sect; it meant social ostracism, it meant the loss of influence, loss of business, loss of friends! It was therefore a bold step, hence Simon must have had good reason for his action. But Jesus may have healed some whom Simon loved, or given him new understanding such as created a faith in his heart that here was indeed the Messiah, or he may have been drawn to Him through sympathy, for bitter persecution of our enemies often excites our compassion and makes us befriend them. But whatever was the prompting, Jesus accepted the invitation, for He had no enmities, not even for His persecutors, and no revilings for the faithless, no pride that lifted Him above association with the lowest or even the sinful.

Simon may have considered it a condescension on his part to invite Jesus to meet his friends at dinner in his house, and this appears to be true, because he did not observe towards his guest the customs which were invariable among Pharisees. Several years before the time of Christ the custom had obtained in Palestine of setting food on table-couches about one foot in height and arranged on three sides of a square, where the guests were served, by the sides of which cushions were placed for the diners to rest on in a reclining position, with feet behind them. Before sitting at the table, hospitality required that several usages, which appear singular to us, be observed. Upon entering the house each guest must remove his sandals and leave them outside the door. He was then received by the host with a kiss on the cheek, and with the salutation, "The Lord be with you." Having thus been welcomed, the guest took his seat beside the table, when a servant brought water and washed his feet as a ceremony figurative of cleanliness. Following this the master of the house or his servant applied to the beard and head of the guest fragrant oil as a ceremonial of anointment, after which another pail of water was brought in for the guest to wash his hands. This latter ceremony was figurative of legal purity as well as an act of cleanliness, the guests having to take their bread in the fingers and dip into a dish that was passed around to all.

The Bathing of Tired Feet.

While the company in Simon's house were partaking of the meal, their feasting was arrested by the entrance of a woman bearing in her hands an alabaster box of ointment; pausing but a moment, in her diffidence, she timidly approached Jesus and with worshipful mien stooped down to anoint with oil and to kiss His feet, as a mark of extreme humility and reverence; but so overcome was she by emotion that a flood of tears gushed from her eyes and fell upon the

unsandaled feet of her Saviour, at the same time her long hair became loosed from its fastenings, which she quickly seized and used as a towel to wipe the feet which her tears of contrition had thus bathed. What agitation, what patience, what sting of conscience, and what adoration exhibited by this sincere penitent! But who was she? Well, she was not a righteous woman, she was not only a Gentile, she was not merely a Pharisee come to acknowledge the hypocrisy of her people, nor a woman who felt regret for an ordinary sin. She was worse than any of these, than all of these, for she was a courtezan. Oh, what a crime is this! What an unpardonable sin, that all the rabbis and the self-righteous, and the proud Pharisees could not condone, but who made the offence as great as murder, or blasphemy, or treason, and who only withheld the penalty of death because there was so much like guilt among themselves. Simon was appalled by such effrontery, horrified, indignant at what he esteemed to be the most aggravating insult

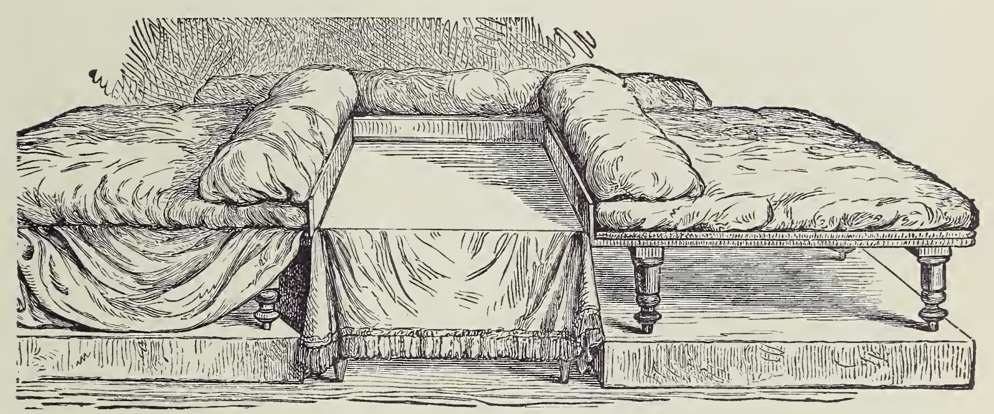


TABLE-COUCHES OF PALESTINE.

that his guest could possibly suffer. Why, no woman, not even a good woman, not even a wife or daughter, might obtrude her presence upon an assemblage of friends at meals, but not only is there here a transgression of social custom but the intruder is a corrupt creature! The disgust of Simon and his Pharisaic fellows, who were doubtless present, was doubly intensified upon seeing Jesus accept with apparent pleasure such defilement, such pollution. "Why," said they in their hearts, "if this Man is what He pretends to be He would have known who the woman is and that she is a sinner, and He would have repelled her advances as a moral leper, whose touch was to be avoided as poison to both flesh and soul."

The Guest Rebukes the Host.

Understanding, by divine perception, what Simon was revolving in his mind, Jesus turned to him and said, "Will you answer Me this question? There was a

certain creditor who had two debtors ; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most ?

"Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

"And He turned unto the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman ? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet ; but she has washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss, but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

"Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much ; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

Then directing His conversation to the penitent and weeping woman, He spoke compassionate words which lifted her soul out of its travail and dispelled the darkness in her heart by the light of divine forgiveness. Said He, "Thy sins be forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee : go in peace."

She was a depraved woman, but by God's immeasurable grace she was not a lost woman ! No sin so great that it may not be reached and cured by the balm of Christ's mercy. Society may pass its harsh criticisms, and brand with disgrace, and afflict with stripes, and aggravate by persecution, but Jesus stands as a barrier against the mockers, and He takes the persecuted but penitent outcasts under His care, when lo ! they are forgiven and depart in peace.

Another Circuit of Galilee.

After the feast at Simon's house, Jesus continued His ministry through all the towns and villages of Galilee, being accompanied on this mission by all the twelve of His apostles and by several women who had been drawn to Him by acts of mercy, and the graciousness of His teachings. These were so devoted in their attachments to our Lord that we rejoice that their names are preserved as the first five mothers of the Church of Christ. Mary, which name is also rendered Miriam, Miriamne and Marie, was probably the earliest of these to accept Jesus. She was a native of Magdala, from whom seven devils had been cast out, but the special circumstance is not reported. There was also Johanna, wife of Chuza, Herod's steward in the palace of Tiberias ; and Mary, wife of Cleophas, or most likely the wife of James the Less, one of the disciples, as Dr. Smith believes ; and Salome, wife of Zebedee, mother of John and James, and sister of our Lord's mother ; and Susanna, about whom also we are told little. These loyal five were women of more or less wealth and influence, and they not only gave to Jesus their heartiest support, but contributed to Him and the disciples from their possessions,



JESUS REBUKING SIMON.—Drawn by Bida.

following Him on all the long and toilsome journeys through the hill country of Galilee, sharing all His hardships and the revilings of Pharisees, and accounting these as blessings because they served to bring them into closer sympathy with Him.

While many in Galilee reflected the prejudices of the scribes and jealous rabbis, friends were not usually wanting to give Jesus and His company food and shelter wherever they stopped, or into whatever village they came. Not only were their immediate wants satisfied by generous persons in the towns through which Jesus passed, but contributions of money were made which were given into the care of Judas as treasurer, who in turn distributed it among the poor, for Jesus would not accept, nor permit His disciples to receive personal profit for His ministrations. He was sent to do the will of God, and to dispense salvation without price, and in doing so to teach the vanity of riches, as opposed to the great rewards reserved for the righteous poor.

In His journeyings through Galilee He preached the new Gospel, and by infractions of immemorial customs of austerity among the Pharisees, He repudiated the empty ceremonials which distinguished their religion; He neither fasted nor feasted, nor affected the ostentatious dress of the rabbis, nor wore leathern phylacteries, nor regarded prescribed texts, nor gave countenance to the ascetic restrictions by which Jews were bound when eating; even the ceremony of baptism seems to have been abandoned, probably because rites or sacrifices of any kind appeared to flavor of Jewish formalism, and to practice any of these would make His condemnation of their rituals, as dissimulation and impiety, inconsistent. But He observed the National festivals at Jerusalem, because by these the people were bound together to a recognition of the principles of atonement for sin, the love of God, and the divine blessings upon the institutions which a departure from the true faith had profaned. But He cared nothing for the shadow which so frail a substance cast. The Temple to Him was but the ghost of what was once a splendid reality; a magnificent body from which the spirit had been cast out; the orisons of its priests only indistinct echoes striking back from the past, and with which understanding did not fellowship. On the other hand, Christ taught in the open air, along the beach, on hillside or mountain peak, in the streets among artisans besweated by toil, or among peasants whose plow was left in the furrow, or among the fishermen who dropped their nets even while hauling in a catch, or in households to which He brought peace. He cared nothing for fine temples, or pretentious monuments whose corner-stone was insincerity. He loved the family altar, He loved His friends, He was democratic to a degree, and among sinners, for whom He had the strongest affection—that love born of compassion—He was not only popular, but He was to them the Christ.

His Mother Seeks Him.

At one place where Christ was preaching and healing, the multitude pressed about Him so closely that His mother and brothers, who were on the outer side of the throng, unable to make their way through, communicated, by one to another, their desire to speak with Him. It is not improbable that He anticipated their request for Him to cease His teaching for a while and take such rest as His overtaxed energies stood so much in need of. Indeed, their anxieties had grown so great that some of His friends seem to have contemplated a forcible seizure of His person to compel His temporary withdrawal from the public. Therefore, when one of the persons learning of Mary's request said to Him: "Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee," He answered: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" And He stretched forth His hands towards His disciples and said: "Behold My mother and My brethren!"

This language embodies no disrespect for His mother, for it is used only as a simile, to show His hearers how He estimates those who hear the word of God and do His will; and how these shall be to Him as brother, sister and mother. While the figure thus given was most impressive upon His hearers, it served also as a gentle reproof to His mother for having regard for His physical rather than His spiritual strength. It was only one of a hundred illustrations which He gave, not only to the multitude that gathered about Him, but to His disciples, His brothers and His mother, that as His commission was from on high so were His energies, and therefore working by Divine direction His corporeal needs were supplied by His spiritual nature.

Charged with the Black Art.

Having for a second time completed a circuit of Galilee, Jesus returned to Capernaum and again entered the house of some one of His many friends there. But His popularity had continued to increase despite the reproaches and insinuations and threats of the rabbis, who sought openly to bring Him into disrepute. They admitted His wonderful powers over death and sickness, but for want of an explanation that would more certainly prejudice Him in the eyes of His followers, they declared that what He did was through the agency of Beelzebub, whom the Phœnicians first introduced as the prince of devils. The rabbis themselves pretended to a possession of secret power, and cultivated occultism. They even claimed to be able to exorcise spirits and to perform many astounding things, which, however, for obvious reasons, they seldom or rather never performed, being apparently content with the pretension. But they taught that there were legions of good and evil spirits, the latter more numerous and generally having greater potentiality, and that they were inextinguishable except by the utterance

of certain magic words, accompanied by prescribed acts which were revealed to none save the rabbis. Belief in this occult power and teachings of the priests prevailed commonly throughout Palestine, and when they accused Jesus of practicing the black art, the charge was not wholly ineffectual. But against it Christ opposed His merciful deeds, and brought clearly to the minds of His hearers the inconsistency of the accusation : that an evil tree might be expected to bring forth good fruit, the sinful to perform righteous acts, Satan himself to be a missionary of the gospel of love, charity and godliness : in short, that hell might with equal reason be converted into heaven, as to ascribe His miracles, His pure life and His teachings to a power borrowed from Beelzebub.

Glorious Dawn of the Parables.

Though at every point of conflict with the rabbis, Jesus covered them with confusion by the unanswerable logic of His reasoning no less than by His deeds, yet this defeat before the multitudes only increased the bitterness of His enemies, who saw themselves as steadily declining in the estimation of the people as Jesus was advancing. They regarded Him as a zealot determined upon overthrowing the Mosaic law and subverting the Jewish theocracy, which meant disaster to rabbinical and Pharisaical influence, and complete destruction of their power with the people. The implacable hostility of the rabbis to Christ is not a rare example of man's antagonism to God for worldly advancement, or for the retention of earthly authority. But Jesus so lightly regarded their enmity, even when it was most threatening, that though He more than once moved out of their immediate reach, He never ceased to condemn the hypocrisy and false pretensions of the rabbis, Pharisees and all evil doers, whatsoever their power or influence.

The multitudes continued to gather about Him, and when He returned to Capernaum He was again forced to leave the house of His friend and the repose it offered, because of the pressing throng. He therefore, as before, repaired to the lake-side. Here also, as previously, the gathering was so great and importunate that He had to seek protection in a boat to avoid the crush. Taking His seat in the prow, only a yard or two from the shore, He instructed the interested congregation by parables, those bold and striking figures of speech and impressive word-illustration which is one of the prime distinguishing marks of His divine ministry. Heretofore we have seen the Lord as a teacher presenting new doctrines in opposition to the beliefs and customs that had the recognition of ages to support their continuance. Some of His sayings were therefore not so easy of interpretation by the ignorant classes who were bound heart and brain to the unyielding forms of ritualism. These direct teachings, while striking home to the hearts of many, fell with imperceptible effect on the heads of others, who, drawn by curiosity, went away to mock. Christ now adopted the parable to



LO, I KNOCK AT EVERY MAN'S DOOR.—Photograph from Celebrated Painting.

embellish His teachings, just as illustrations are used to ornament and impress the text of a book. At the same time He gave to them just enough mysticism to excite wonder and to impress with greater firmness those susceptible to instructions,—those who while yet spiritually blind had extreme sensibility of perception, which made them eager to understand when once their curiosity was aroused. The parable was used by rabbis and the Hellenes long before the time of Christ, but it was reserved for Him to present the figure in a stronger light and deeper sense of application to the relationship which man occupies toward his fellows and toward God.

Parable of the Sower.

Instead of delivering a discourse to the congregation by the seaside, Jesus instructed them by presenting to them the parable of a sower, who, without first preparing his field, scattered his seed in a careless manner, regardless of where they might fall, trusting to fortune for the harvest which they might produce. Those seeds which fell by the wayside, or on stony ground, or among thorns were of course destroyed, by being trampled upon, or scorched, or choked out by thriftier growths. But those which fell on good ground sprang up and yielded bounteously.

Even those who knew Jesus best, and believed on Him most, did not at first understand the purport of this parable, failing to discover the lesson which it embodied, in the confusion which they felt at the departure thus made from His usual manner of teaching and reasoning. So when His disciples and many others of His followers were alone with Him, they asked why He spoke to the people in parables. To this inquiry He made exposition of His purpose by explaining to them the difference between those who believed on Him, and those who were yet in the darkness of doubt. He further illustrated this distinction by an explanation of the parable as follows :

"The sower soweth the word of God. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the devil immediately, and catcheth away the word that was sown in his heart, lest he should believe and be saved. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it ; yet hath he not root in himself, so he endureth but for a while, and in time of temptation falleth away, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, immediately he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of life, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it, and in an

honest good heart keepeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold."

This parable may also be considered as a primary object lesson delivered to the disciples and to all Christians. Christ had foreseen the hostility which His teachings would excite, and now He and His followers were confronted by persecutions of the rabbinical sect, and the temptations which mockers of every school had to offer. The parable was therefore a striking prefigurement of what His followers must endure for righteousness' sake, and an illustration of the necessities which must be the equipment of all true disciples. No man setteth a lighted candle under a vessel, but he places it where it will shed the most light; so must those who confess God set the light of their confession and understanding before men, that it may be as a watch-fire in the path of righteousness, and a beacon to direct the way of the repentant against the temptations of the sinful.

A Ruined Crop.

When the multitude came to Him again Jesus spoke to them in other parables, presenting in each a lesson of obedience to God, the spiritual growth of knowledge in the minds of the faithful, and the promises of the new kingdom which He had come to establish in the hearts of men. He therefore offered many parables as similitudes to the kingdom of heaven, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who soweth good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among his wheat, and went his way."

In Palestine there is a weed called *darnel*, which before it comes to a head bears such close resemblance to wheat, that it cannot be distinguished from the other, so that the opinion is general among farmers of that country that *darnel*, or *zizamia*, is degenerated wheat, as we consider *cheat* to be. Yet when the growth puts out a head the resemblance no longer continues, so that children are employed to separate one from the other before threshing. The grains of the darnel are so poisonous that if by chance they become mixed with wheat the flour therefrom if eaten may produce convulsions and even death.

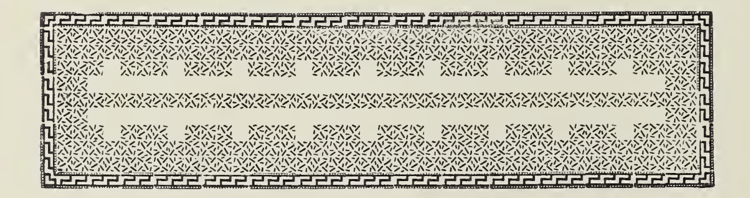
The parable which Christ gave becomes more illustrative in the light of this information, as it serves to show the likeness between the first stages of faith and good resolutions in the minds of all men, and the wide difference which afterwards appears between the weak and worldly-bound man and the firm and resolute who swerve not from early convictions of their duty towards God. The parable is therefore given to show us the importance of watchfulness against the temptations no less than the machinations of enemies. The parable following, or that of the seed growing secretly, is an explanation of that of the wheat and tares. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth

not how.'' Thus if we continue not exclusive in our faith, but use our influence at all times for the betterment of the world, the fruits of our persistent and goodly labors will appear to gladden our hearts and give us greater favor with God.

'' Another parable put He forth unto them, saying : The kingdom of heaven is likened to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field ; which is the least of all seeds ; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree and shooteth out branches, so that birds of the air come and lodge under the shadow of it or in the branches thereof.'' And again is the kingdom of heaven likened unto leaven which being put into a measure of meal leaveneth the whole.

And Jesus likened his kingdom unto a treasure hid in a field which a man chances to find ; or like a merchant who, seeking pearls, findeth one greater than all others, which he sells all his other possessions to obtain ; or like a net cast into the sea which draweth in a great catch of fish, some good and some bad, and the bad are separated from the good and cast away.

The kingdom of heaven is the pearl of great price, the one inestimable treasure, and the faithfulness and righteousness of a man, resolute in the service of God, shall be the net that drags the ocean of humanity and brings the good to Christ ; the householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old as an offering to God : His works are the seed that grow up from a small beginning into a tree which casts a grateful shadow and invites to its refreshing retreat the sin-stricken and the penitential ; the beginning of his teaching, the leaven that sets into action the goodly forces of righteousness until all about him are brought by his good deeds, splendid example, and worship of God to see the beauty and satisfaction and golden promise of a truly religious life, and come to embrace it.



CHAPTER XVIII.

THE STORM OF RANCOR BLACKENS.

HOSTILITY of the Pharisees no doubt seriously interrupted the good work of Jesus in Galilee, although here were nearly all His friends, and gathered about Him were hundreds, if not thousands, of devoted followers. Open conflict had not yet resulted, except in the few instances described, but the rabbis were bringing all the power of their very great influence to bear, to discredit Him in the minds of the people who were attracted by His teachings and miracles.

To allay the ill-feeling that had been aroused against Him, and which was increasing, Jesus resolved to depart for a while from Capernaum ; or else He was influenced to visit Jerusalem by the approach of an annual feast, which would give Him opportunity to renew His ministry at the nation's capital under the favoring circumstances of the popularity in which He was held by the people of all provinces who would be gathered there. Jesus had no reason to fear His enemies, but the purpose of His mission required Him to withdraw from time to time from places where Pharisee despotism or absolutism was so complete that antagonism to it exposed His followers, as well as Himself, to persecution and direful threatenings. Until His time was come, therefore, He avoided a more serious conflict than a courteous answering of all cavilers, and an exposure of the bold hypocrisies of His vain-righteous critics, and when these threatenings grew ominous He retired for a while only to reappear in another field, where He resumed His beneficent labors.

Departing from Capernaum, Jesus set out for Jerusalem to attend one of the annual festivals, but whether it was the feast of Purim, or the Passover, or Pentecost, or of the Tabernacles, we do not know, nor do the Apostles tell us, neither do we know whether or not the Apostles accompanied Him, or whether He had any company whatever. The record is very brief, and the incident which followed His appearance at Jerusalem is made by John to appear as occurring directly after the second miracle, or the healing of the nobleman's son. For several reasons, however, it is quite improbable that Jesus returned to Jerusalem so soon after His rejection in Judea, for it would have been impolitic in Him to do so on account of the rancorous feeling which was excited by His cleansing of the Temple, and the death of John, which had caused great excitement among the people and no small concern to Herod.

The Mineral Baths.

At the present visit to Jerusalem Jesus did not make Himself conspicuous on many occasions, so that no mention of His deeds done while there is made, save alone of His healing an infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda, and of the controversy which grew out of the act. Jerusalem's supply of water in the time of Christ was dependent upon several springs, or pools, and wells sunk by people rich enough to afford them. The Temple was provided with large cisterns excavated out of the lime-stone rock beneath, and occasionally families had similar provisions, but water was generally a scarce article in the dry seasons, so that such pools as remained full became congregating places for the poor who came to draw water in skins and jars, in which vessels it was peddled about the city.

One of the largest and most noted pools was known as that of Bethesda, which was located, as recent explorers declare, in the northwest corner of the Temple enclosure, and, as John says, near the sheep-gate. It is believed to have been a large reservoir, hewn out of the lime-stone and divided into two connecting pools by a stone wall which was separated in the centre by a space of only a few feet. That these waters contained mineral properties is certain, and such pools or springs were in great repute among the people for their curative virtues. The separation of the reservoir by a wall—as recently discovered—leads to the impression that the pool was of flowing water, so that the upper reservoir supplied water for drinking while the lower pool was reserved for bathers. The waters were believed to be most effective when "troubled," or when heavy rains tinged them by washings from the red soil above, or when there was a fresh flow after a long intermission. We know that "Siloam's brook, which flowed fast by the oracle of God," was, as its neighbor, the Fountain of the Virgin, is to-day, a remittent pool, and it is probable that Bethesda was also. There can be no doubt but that in addition to the natural quality of these mineral waters, there was a supernatural strength which the inspired record calls "an angel troubling the waters."

Chronic Rheumatism Cured.

The healing virtues of Bethesda's pool were so famous that at certain seasons, when these properties were most effective, the place was thronged with persons suffering from infirmities of almost every nature : the palsied, paralyzed, rheumatic, the lame, deaf and blind, and such other afflictions. The city, or charitable persons, having recognized the great virtue of the waters, for the better accommodation of those who resorted here in the hope of being cured, built five porches about the pool, which served both as shelter and repose, while steps were also built leading down into the water for the benefit of the bathers.

As Jesus was ever attracted to the suffering, He came to this pool, not as a mere spectator, but to do some beneficent act, and to excite with hope many who



JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES CROSSING MT. OLIVET.

had bathed so long in vain. His sympathetic eye was specially arrested by a sufferer whose protracted affliction must have almost worn out expectation in any less hopeful mind. The man had been a cripple, probably from inflammatory rheumatism, for a period of thirty-eight years—more than the average human life. There on a mat the helpless sufferer lay, with no friends about him, and no kindly aid proffered to help him into the healing waters. Time and again, perhaps, he had lain there and seen the pool troubled by what he believed was a good angel, and as often witnessed the wild scramble of the more fortunate afflicted as they rushed down into the gracious reservoir, or were plunged into the seething bath by friendly assisting hands ; yet he alone was suffered to lie unattended, and uncared for.

Jesus, the embodiment of godly compassion, the soul of sympathy, the very essence of tenderness, the God of mercy, could not look on such a sight without His great heart of pity being moved to immediate action, so approaching the distressful object of extraordinary misfortune, He said to him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Jesus knew what would be his answer : He knew how long the poor sufferer had waited and hoped for that help which cruel circumstances and the inhumanity of others had denied him. The question must therefore have been asked with the view to discovering how far the man's hopes had been spent. "Sir," answered the impotent man, "when the water is troubled no one offers to help me into the bath, and without assistance I can do nothing for myself. If I attempt to drag myself to the steps others rush in and crowd me away, so that sorry indeed is my condition." He may have added, "Will you, dear Sir, not help me?" And immediately the Divine Physician said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." It was the same command that He had spoken to the palsied one who had been let down through the roof of a house in which He was teaching, and the effect of that speech was repeated now, for straightway he who had been impotent for thirty-eight years arose in perfect restoration, and picking up his pallet he walked away with heart full of thankfulness.

A Precious Crowd of Hypocrites.

This gracious act was performed on the Sabbath day, and with their hearts already filled with jealously the Pharisees seized on this violation of the Sabbatic law to renew their persecutions of Jesus. So rigid were the laws respecting the Sabbath that it was forbidden even to do good, to help the sick, to minister to any who might meet with dangerous accident, to save even from destruction on the Sabbath day. Such injunctions, prohibitions and permissions were never known to any other hierarchy, and were so restrictive and unreasonable as to exhibit the Jewish mind in its wildest eccentricity.

After performing the miracle, Jesus disappeared by mixing with the multitude which thronged about the pool, but the man who was healed was quickly seen as



JESUS HEALING THE IMPOTENT MAN. – Drawn by Bida.

he made his way out of the crowd carrying his pallet under his arm. The Jews promptly challenged him by saying, "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed on the Sabbath day." To which the restored man answered, "He that made me whole, the same said, Take up thy bed and walk," rightly divining that one who had such mastery over disease was master also of human laws, and above the senseless proscriptions of the insincere Pharisees and Sadducees.

The one who had been thus miraculously healed did not know his benefactor and had not even suspicioned that it was the Messiah who had been creating such excitement in Galilee by His Divine power over human afflictions; but soon after he saw Jesus in the Temple, and approached Him, no doubt, to make some acknowledgment of his great gratitude, but was answered, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worst thing come unto thee." Thereupon the man went at once to some of the Jews and pointed out to them Jesus as the one who had healed him.

The word went quickly from mouth to mouth, "There is the culprit: there is the one who violates the Sabbath and casts out devils and heals the sick in the name of Beelzebub. There is the one who binds up the broken-hearted, who breaks the strong seal of death, but who berates us as mockers of God, and who exposes the hollow pretences of the rabbis, and the vanity of our ceremonials. Let us forthwith accuse Him and make Him answerable before the law." All dissensions and rancorous hatreds which dissevered the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the rabbis and priests, were subordinated for the time being to the one great desire for the conviction of what they regarded as their common enemy.

It is not so stated by John, but the inference is plain that Jesus was arrested and brought to answer before the authorities on the charge of Sabbath-breaking. Serene before His judges He made a defence which brought consternation to His accusers. He did not denounce them in speech of fury or fiery condemnation, but proclaiming Himself as the Son of God, He announced that His purpose was to offer to them the means of salvation through belief in Him. When they answered that this was only testimony of Himself and blasphemy of God, He condemned them by citing the laws of Moses and what was written concerning Him by that great lawgiver: that further, He of Himself could do nothing except by the aid of God, and therefore the wonders which He performed were done by the favor and the aid of His Heavenly Father. "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me. John was sent as a witness to declare Me to you, but him you rejected as you now reject Me, but I have greater witness than John, for the works which I do is the testimony of God, from whom alone power is given Me. If you reject Me so then must you reject Him who hath sent Me."

So well did Jesus answer His accusers that, though they were more inflamed against Him, and resolved to pursue Him to His death, they released Him for the time, thinking that some occasion thereafter would be more fit to bring Him to a final judgment.

The hostility against Jesus had now become so fierce that He quit Jerusalem and started back towards Capernaum, traveling afoot, as He invariably did. He may have hoped to escape His persecutors, or else suffered, for Divine purpose, the abuse of His enemies to continue; but the Pharisees and rabbis, like sleuth-hounds upon the trail, never abandoned their infamous design upon His life. They kept detectives on His track to report all His doings and to accuse Him for every infraction against the austere laws and customs governing social as well as public life, and otherwise adopted every expedient to bring Him into disrepute with His followers.

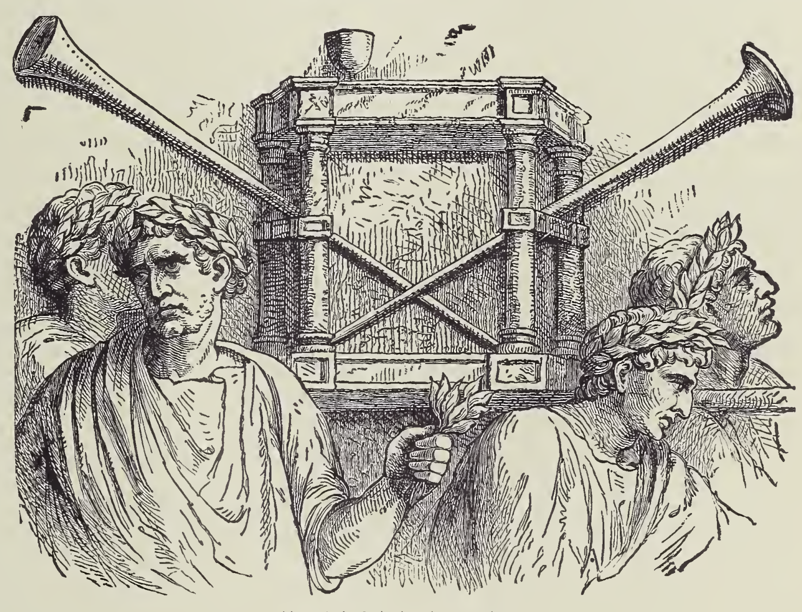


TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

Shortly after leaving Jerusalem, while with His disciples passing through some part of Galilee on a Sabbath day, His route lay through a field of ripening corn. They were very hungry, no doubt from observing the custom of fasting on the Sabbath, and they availed themselves of the privilege which custom granted of plucking enough grain to partially satisfy their cravings. The Sabbatical law prohibited eating before morning service, and supper was not permitted until after evening service, but ignoring this, as He had other senseless ceremonies and super-rigid customs, Jesus permitted its violation and had no word of criticism for His disciples, even when they shelled the grain for eating, after plucking the ears. The spies who witnessed this breach of the law made quick report of it to the Pharisees, who in turn at once condemned Him for the infraction, and considered

death by stoning as a worthy punishment therefor. Jesus replied to their accusations by reciting, in defence of His conduct, the incident of David, who, when fleeing from Saul, and pressed by hunger, seized upon some shewbread, upon which he satisfied his hunger, though it was not lawful for any save the priests to eat such consecrated food. And Jesus also reminded them that the priests performed their appointed duties on the Sabbath, yet they were not accounted as desecrating the day. Natural laws are above the rules which men may adopt, and it is lawful therefore to satisfy the necessities of the body, and if priests may officiate at service and discharge their duties on the Sabbath in the Temple, how much greater right has the Son of God and His servants to perform their ministrations, whether to the body or the soul, and whether on the week day or the Sabbath, for "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

As Schenkel observes, and quoted by Geikie, "The lowering schoolmen of the day, and the priestly party, felt themselves threatened in their most cherished hopes, wishes and interests. The breach between them and Jesus had been final, since His half-contemptuous words about the old garment and the new bottles. They had marked Him, definitely, as opposed to traditional rabbinism, as a dangerous agitator, as an enemy of the 'Hedge of the Law,' the glory of successive generations of rabbis. The hierarchy would have at once indicted Him publicly, but for His wide popularity : the devotion felt for Him by the multitude He had healed and comforted ; the transparent singleness of His aims and labors ; the greatness and dignity of His character, which enforced reverence, and His divine humility and lowliness of heart, which made Him so unassailable."

Paralysis Pulsates into Health.

The carpings, the accusings and the condemnings of the Pharisees could have no effect on Jesus, who pursued his way utterly regardless of the hostility which he had provoked. When His enemies openly criticised His practices He turned aside only long enough to administer to them a trenchant rebuke, by way of appeals to the highest reason, to the law, to precedent and to human necessities, leaving them covered with confusion, and then renewing His labors of mercy with the same placidity and kindness of disposition He had before displayed.

His popularity with the masses prevented the Pharisees from closing the synagogues to Jesus, who on occasions continued to preach in them on the Sabbath day, and invariably to large audiences. Soon after His last conflict with the Pharisees He repaired to a synagogue to conduct the customary Sabbath service, followed of course by many scribes and Pharisees who watched continually for fresh opportunities to expose Him as a law-breaker. After the congregation had been seated the attention of Jesus was directed towards a man whose right hand had withered under the blast of a stroke of paralysis, and which now hung

shriveled and useless by his side. With Christ, to do good at all times and on all occasions was fitting, and in this sanctuary it was to Him especially appropriate to perform a gracious deed, which, while showing forth His divine power as the Son of God, and therefore the righteous teacher, would also condemn anew the hypocrites who were content with observing laws which shut them out from a true conception of the mercy and goodness of God. He therefore asked the afflicted man to stand up in the midst of the congregation, and then turning to the rabbis by His side He asked them, "Is it lawful to do good, or to do evil: to save life or to destroy?" But the vain-glorious and self-righteous teachers were afraid to answer Him before the people, for they had measured their lances with Him too many times before, and suffered inglorious defeat as often, to give occasion for their exposure and discomfiture before those whom they were secretly seeking to prejudice against Him. Finding them silent under His questionings, Jesus then asked them if it was not lawful to help a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath day? This was permitted under the law, therefore said He, "How much better is a man than a sheep!" But still they made no answer. Then, by way of more emphatically illustrating His lesson of mercy, He said to the man with a withered hand, "Stretch forth thy hand," which being done, immediately the withered member became whole and was infused again with the power that had long before departed.

Before such a miracle the people must have applauded: some who before felt doubts were convicted, some who before had been drawn to Him by curiosity must have now believed on Him, and there was glory-giving, and praise offering; and vows of devotion were sent up by many of the congregation; but the worldly-ambitious scribes, Pharisees, priests and rabbis sat scowling and spiteful under the Divine exhibition, their hearts full of pollution and murderous desires, which were restrained only by fear of those who accepted Him.



CHAPTER XIX.

FOLDING UP A CYCLONE OF GENNESARET.

GENNESARET, Tiberias, Galilee—three names for the same lake. No other gem ever had so beautiful a setting. It lay in a scene of great luxuriance; the surrounding hills high, terraced, sloped, grooved, so many hanging gardens of beauty, the waters rumbling down between rocks of gray and red limestone, flashing from the hills and bounding into the sea. On the shore were castles, armed towers, Roman baths, everything attractive and beautiful; all styles of vegetation in shorter space than in almost any other spot in all the world, from the palm-tree of the forest to the trees of rigorous climate.

It seems as if the Lord had launched one wave of beauty on all the scene, and it hung and swung from rock and hill and oleander. Roman gentlemen in pleasure boats sailing the lake, and countrymen in fishing smacks coming down to drop their nets, pass each other with nod and shout and laughter, or swinging idly at their moorings. Oh, what a wonderful, what a beautiful lake!

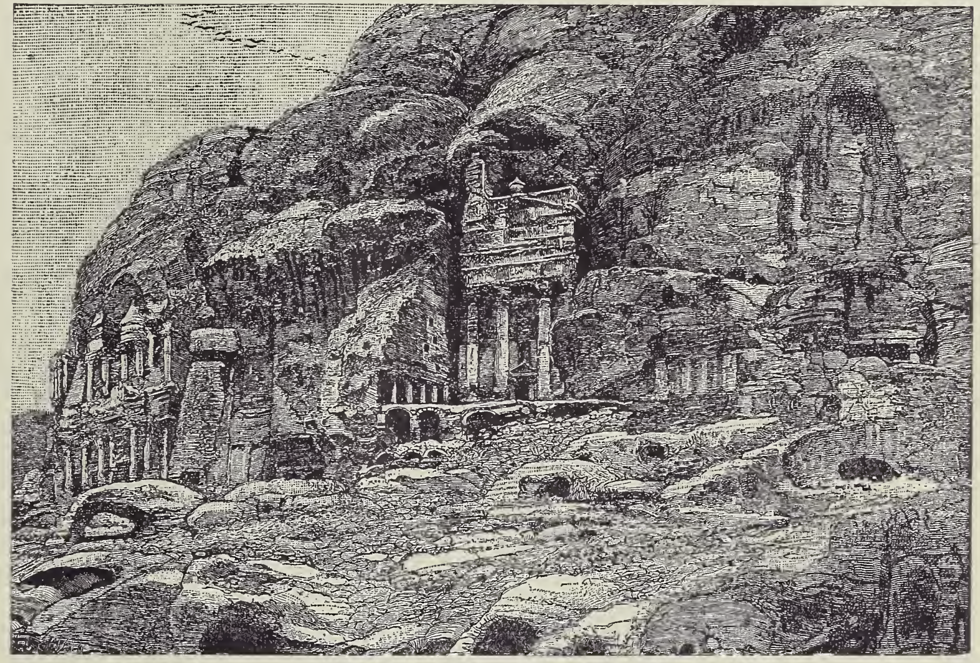
It seems as if we shall have a quiet night. Not a leaf trembles in the air; not a ripple disturbs the face of Gennesaret; but there seems to be a little excitement up the beach, and we hasten to see what it is, and we find it an embarkation.

From the western shore a flotilla pushing out; not a squadron, or deadly armament, or clipper with valuable merchandise, or piratic vessels ready to destroy everything they can seize; but a flotilla, bearing messengers of life, and light and peace. Christ and His disciples are in a boat, and He weary with much speaking is put into somnolence by the rocking of the waves. If there was any motion at all, if the wind passed from starboard to larboard, or from larboard to starboard, the boat would rock, and by the gentleness of the motion put the Master asleep. And they extemporized a pillow made out of a fisherman's coat. I think no sooner is Christ prostrate, and His head touched the pillow, than He is sound asleep. The breezes of the lake run their fingers through the locks of the worn sleeper, and the boat rises and falls like a sleeping child on the bosom of a sleeping mother.

Calm night, starry night, beautiful night. Run up all the sails, ply all the oars, and let the large boat and the small boat glide over gentle Gennesaret. But the sailors say there is going to be a change of weather. And even the

passengers can hear the moaning of the storm, as it comes on with great stride, and all the terrors of cyclone and darkness. The large boat trembles like a deer at bay among the clangor of the hounds; great patches of foam are flung into the air; the sails of the vessel loosen, and in the strong wind crack like pistols; the smaller boats like petrels poise on the cliff of the waves and then plunge.

Overboard go cargo, tackling and masts, and the drenched disciples rush into the back part of the boat, and lay hold of Christ, and say unto Him: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" That great personage lifts His head from the pillow of the fisherman's coat, walks to the front of the vessel,



TOMBS CARVED IN THE ROCKS.

and looks out into the storm. All around Him are the smaller boats, driven in the tempest, and through it comes the cry of drowning men. By the flash of lightning I see the calm brow of Christ as the spray dropped from His beard. He has one word for the sky and another for the waves. Looking upward He cries: "Peace!" Looking downward He says: "Be still."

The waves crouch like whipt spaniels at His feet. The extinguished stars relight their torches, The tempest falls dead. Christ stands with His foot on the neck of the storm. And while the sailors are bailing out the boats, and while they are trying to untangle the cordage, the disciples stand in amazement, now

looking into the calm sea, then into the calm sky, then into the calm Saviour's countenance, and they cry out: "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Dethroned Reason Crowned Again.

How softly dropped down the gentle breezes when the storm-giant had sped away, and clasping the sails in their arms they bore the boats lightly over the becalmed waters until the pebbly bank of Gadara was reached. But scarcely had the boats touched shore when, instead of joyful welcome to the tired and persecuted Christ, He was received by two insane persons, one of whom was the most miserable and loathsome object that was ever clothed in the form of manhood. Not a vestment covered his befouled, lacerated and distorted body; his bedraggled beard and hair were the repository of grime and filth that had not been cleansed in years, and his eyes flamed with wild distemper, reflecting the distraction and delirium of reason for a long time dethroned. With the strength and boldness of a maniac he and his unfortunate companion had terrorized the whole country thereabouts, and there was added to the fear which his frenzy and diabolism inspired the superstitious regard of the people who, because the demoniacs had taken up their abode among sepulchres and grave stones, believed that they were in league with Satan.

Miserable, brain-racked, frantic bedlamite as one of these poor possessed men was, at intervals a ray of reason pierced for a short time the darkness of his intellect, and during these brief lucid moments, he would cry out for relief from his great torment. It was in one of these intervals of consciousness that the demoniac met Jesus, as the great physician stepped out of the boat, and through some unexplained power—possibly divine revealment—the unfortunate immediately recognized Him as the Lord and fell down in worshipful attitude, hoping to be released from his tormentors. Though conscious of the Divine presence, the man was not permitted to speak his own desires and confessions, being apparently so completely under the control of devils that these made him cry out in speech for them, "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time? I adjure Thee, by God, that Thou torment me not." Therefore addressing the devils, Jesus asked: "What is thy name?" to which the response was made: "My name is Legion, for we are many."

The devils recognized the omnipotent power of Jesus and knew Him to be their implacable adversary sent into the world to save men from evil influence, and that the time for their casting-out was now at hand. They therefore begged of Him "that He would not send them away out of the country, nor command them to go out into the deep." A herd of swine were on the hill-side not far away,



RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

and into these the devils besought the Lord that they might be sent, which was accordingly done. No sooner had the word "Go" been spoken than the two thousand broke into panic and in mad distraction fled down a steep place and into the sea, where they all quickly perished, while the now dispossessed demoniac crouched in gratitude at Jesus' feet clothed in a restored mind.

The Gadarenes were herders of swine, which was, indeed, their principal occupation. They not only ate the flesh so strongly prohibited by their Jewish neighbors, but offered swine in their sacrifices, and were therefore looked upon with profound contempt by the Jews, and their religious customs were regarded as abominations. The manner of restoring the demoniac, involving as it did such great destruction of swine, is difficult to explain unless we accept it as a lesson which Christ imparted to both His disciples and the Gadarenes, as showing His approval of the Jewish laws prohibiting the use of pork and the raising of swine. It may have been also His purpose to fix, by such illustrations, the relationship of devils with scavengers and all manner of pollution, in order to make them the more repugnant in our estimation, and thereby to fortify us the better against their insinuations, whatever guise they may adopt.

The Gadarenes, while astounded at the miracle which had been performed, regarded the loss of their swine more than the possible good of Christ's teachings, for they were a most debased and ignorant people, and instead of receiving Him, besought Him to immediately leave their country. For some reason, Jesus decided to forthwith return to Capernaum, but as He stepped again into the boat, the restored man, with heart overflowing with thankfulness, prayed for permission to accompany his Saviour. This Jesus did not permit, for seeing in the subject a possible missionary in His cause, He was told to "go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath compassion on thee." Therefore, Decapolis rang for a time with praise of Jesus out of the mouth of the restored demoniac, who proclaimed to every one the merciful and mighty deed which the Lord had done for him.

White Lily of Death Blushes into Red Rose of Life.

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a great multitude met Him with hearty welcome, for it was with grief that they had seen Him depart from them, not knowing when He would come back. Many of these anxious waiters were sufferers from distressing afflictions which they knew Christ alone could heal, while others were firm believers and friends who constantly craved His presence. But scarcely had He stepped on shore and met the glad tidings of the joyous crowd when He was surprised by the urgent petition of a chief ruler of the synagogue, Jairus by name, who, falling at His feet, begged Him with words and tears of extreme distress to come at once to his house and

heal his dying daughter. What a condescending from the hard and cruel plottings and the murderous jealousies of his party, who were now employing all manner of means to compass the destruction of Jesus! Being one of the hierarchal rulers and church dignitaries, Jairus must have joined with his colleagues in a persecution of Him whose aid he now sought. But how the lowering brow of insolence uplifts, and the eye of anger pales, and the rigid lip of scorn turns to quivers under the stroke of affliction. And so with Jairus; ready to condemn, to persecute, to destroy at the instigation of worldly preferment, he now discovers the emptiness of power, the mockery of ambition, as death stands in his doorway demanding the sacrifice of his daughter. The hand that was uplifted to strike is now extended to implore; the heart that was filled with bitter hate, now opens and pours out its devotion; the tongue that was loosed to imprecation, now gives utterance to praise. "And when Jairus saw Jesus he fell at His feet, and worshiped Him, and besought Him greatly, saying, 'My little daughter (for he had only one daughter, about twelve years of age) lieth at the point of death; I pray Thee come and lay Thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live.'"

To this appeal Jesus was all sympathy, and without stopping to remind Jairus of the malignant spirit that actuated His enemies, or to ask him if indeed he felt contrition, or making belief on Him a condition of His healing the child, Jesus set forth presently for the house of affliction. But as they drew near the voice of lamentation and the soft whistle of dirge-flutes broke upon the ear, giving funereal announcement. How the heart of Jairus must have sunk, and all his energies been wrung into weakness, and existence have become to him an agony, as he thought of his only daughter in life; her sweet laugh, dancing feet, lute-like voice, cheering caress and love-lighted eyes; and then contrasted the happy days when she bounded before him in glowing health, with the pall, the cerements, the wails that now hung over the pulseless body of his child, the crushed and decayed blossom of his pride and hope; the feet that would dance no more, the caresses that would never be repeated, and the loving eyes that were closed till they open again in the light of a fadeless morning.

Jesus saw how Jairus's heart was bleeding, and He turned with a look of divine compassion when one came out of the house to meet the sorrowing father with the news, "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master," and rescued him from the overwhelming tidal-wave of grief by saying to him: "Fear not, believe only, and she shall be made whole."

It was the custom among the Jews to begin preparations for burial immediately after death ensued, so that when Jesus appeared at the house the body may have been laid out wrapped in its cerements only awaiting Jairus's return to proceed with the interment. All this, while loud lamentations of relations

and friends broke from the house of mourning, left no chance of doubting that the child was indeed dead. Jesus paused on the threshold and forbade any one entering the room of death except Peter, James, John and the father and mother. Then entering and approaching the body, He gazed upon the pallid features for a moment as if reflecting upon the solemnity of death, after which He turned and said, "Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth." Instead of accepting His words in confidence, or understanding the true meaning of His declaration, they that were present made a scornful reply. At this Jesus bade them all leave the room a moment, and being now alone with the damsel, He took her by the hand and as one having power over death as well as over disease, He commanded her to rise. As He spoke the death-angel knew His voice and returned again with the spirit, which was given back to the maid and she arose in perfect health, hungry from the fast of sleep. When Jesus restored her to the arms of her overjoyed parents, He only charged them to tell no one of what He had done.

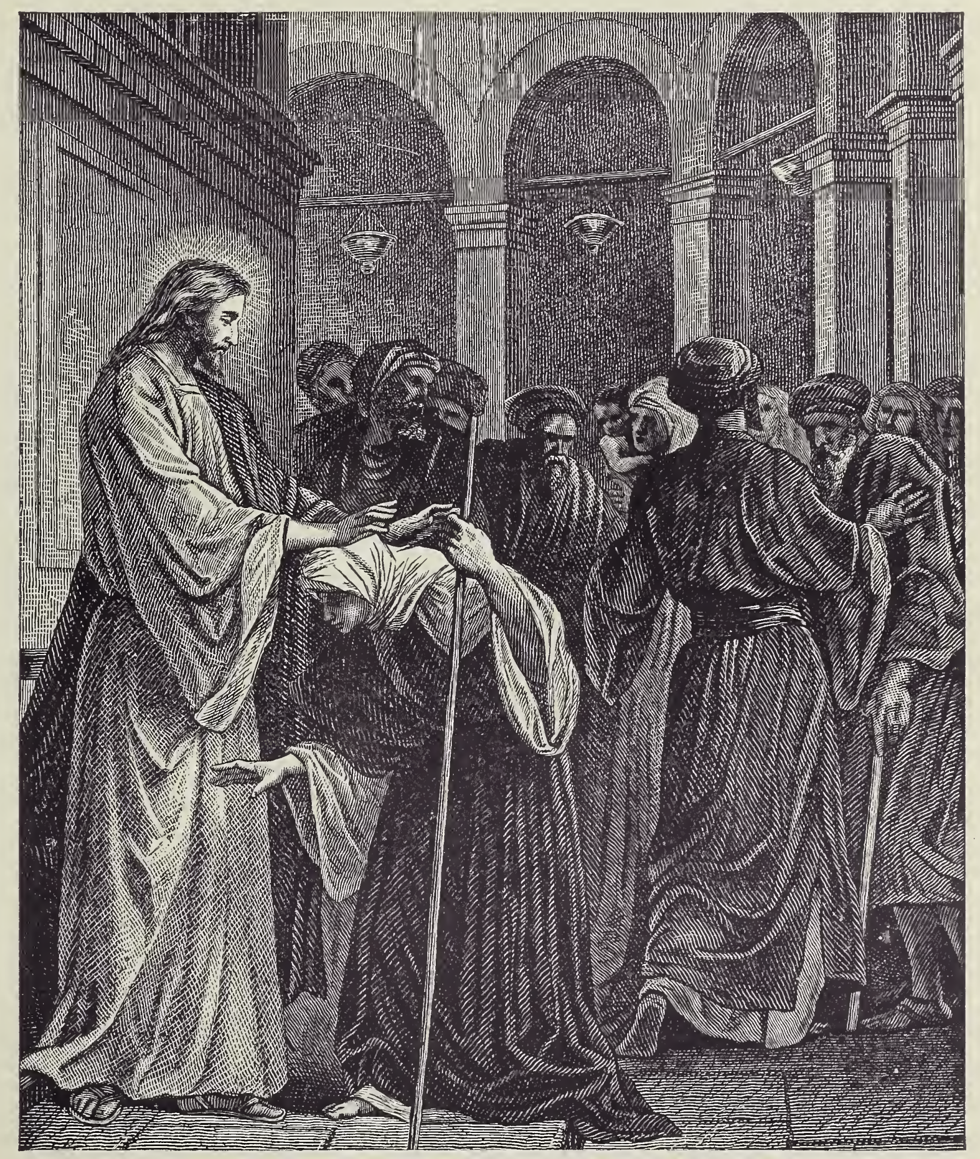
Sensitive to a Touch.

But while on the way to Jairus's house another wondrous miracle was performed, which startled the multitude that followed Him with reverent amazement. While going to minister in the house of a rich or influential man, to raise up the dead and bind up a wound of immeasurable depth, He gives of His healing virtue to a poor woman, who had secretly sought His all-powerful aid.

A great crowd of excited people elbowing each other this way and that, and Christ in the midst of the commotion. They were on the way to see Him restore to complete health a dying person. Some thought He could effect the cure, others that He could not. At any rate, it would be an interesting experiment. A very sick woman of twelve years' invalidism is in the crowd. Some say her name was Martha, others say it was Veronica. I do not know what her name was; but this is certain: she had tried all styles of cure. Every shelf of her humble home had medicines on it. She had employed many of the doctors of that time when medical science was more rude and rough and ignorant than we can imagine in this time, when the word physician or surgeon stands for potent and educated skill. Professor Lightfoot gives a list of what he supposes may have been the remedies she had applied. I suppose she had been blistered from head to foot, and had tried the compress, and had used all styles of astringent herbs, and had been mauled and hacked and cut and lacerated until life to her was a plague. Beside that, the Bible indicates her doctors' bills had run up frightfully, and she had paid money for medicines and for surgical attendance and for hygienic apparatus until her purse was as exhausted as her body.

What, poor woman, are you doing in that jostling crowd? Better go home and to bed and nurse your disorders. No! Wan and wasted and faint she stands

there, her face distorted with suffering, and ever and anon biting her lip with



JESUS BLESSING THE RESTORED WOMAN.—Drawn by Bida.

some acute pain, and sobbing until her tears fall from the hollow eye upon the faded dress ; only able to stand because the crowd is so close to her, pushing her

this way and that. Stand back! Why do you crowd that poor body? Have you no consideration for a dying woman? But just at that time the crowd parts and this invalid comes almost up to Christ; but she is behind Him and His human eye does not take her in. She has heard so much about His kindness to the sick, and she does feel so wretched, she thinks if she can only just touch Him once it will do her good. She will not touch Him on the sacred head, for that might be irreverent. She will not touch Him on the hand, for that might seem too familiar. She says: "I will, I think, touch Him on His coat, not on top of it or on the bottom of the main fabric, but on the border, the blue border, the long threads of the fringe of that blue border; there can be no harm in that. I don't think He will hurt me, I have heard so much about Him. Beside that, I can stand this no longer. Twelve years of suffering have worn me out. This is my last hope." And she presses through the crowd still further and reaches for Christ, but cannot quite touch Him. She pushes still further through the crowd and kneels and puts her finger to the edge of the blue fringe of the border. She just touches it. Quick as an electric shock there thrilled back into her shattered nerves and shrunken veins and exhausted arteries and panting lungs and withered muscles, health, beautiful health, rubicund health—God-given and complete health. Twelve years' march of pain and pang and suffering over suspension-bridge of nerve and through tunnel of bone instantly halted.

Christ recognizes somehow that magnetic and healthful influence through the medium of the blue fringe of His garment had shot out. He turns and looks upon that excited crowd, and startles them with the well-known interrogatory: "Who touched Me?" The insolent crowd in substance replied, "How do we know? You get in a crowd like this and you must expect to be jostled. You ask us a question you know we cannot answer." But the roseate and rejuvenated woman came up and knelt in front of Christ, and told of the touch, and told of the restoration, and Jesus said: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace." So Mark gives us a dramatization of the Gospel.

Optic Nerves Wakened.

The stopping of a poor woman's hemorrhage, and restoring to life of Jairus's daughter served to increase His fame among the people, but it increased the bitterness of His foes. Every step forward in the affections of the multitude was, to the Pharisees and rabbis, made at the expense of their popularity. Jesus was increasing while they were decreasing; to relax their persecutions or their contumacious bearing would but hasten the threatened downfall of their influence, hence their continued activity in propagating unbelief in Him, by ascribing His acts to power borrowed from Satan. And over all Galilee and Judah these tares

of enmity and malicious jealousy were sown by active hands. But Christ departed not from His holy purpose either to placate enemies or gratify friends. His mercy



HEALING THE DUMB MAN POSSESSED OF A DEVIL.—Drawn by Doré.

and His love were alike boundless, and the field of His labors all the world, recognizing no distinctions either in class or religion, in poverty or wealth, in influence or obscurity.

As He came out of the house of Jairus, the great throng pressed about Him as before and among those who followed in the long train of afflicted persons were two blind men who ceased not to hail Him as the Messiah, and to cry to Him; "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." Jesus saw that the faith of these two unfortunates was indeed great, and He therefore rewarded their trustfulness by touching their eyes and saying to them, "According to your faith be it unto you," and immediately the darkness in which they had long groped was dispelled, beclouded vision became glorious sight, so that though they were warned against speaking of the mercy that had been shown them, their joy and gratitude were so great that tongue could not withhold praise-giving.

Soon after, possibly immediately after, a dumb demoniac was brought to Jesus, a poor unfortunate who was not only deprived of the power of speech, but who was also possessed of a devil, so that his mind was distracted and he was only a gibbering idiot. Such an object of human affliction appealed so strongly to the Divine healer, whose heart was the fountain from whence flowed only mercy and compassion, that He cast out the devil and gave speech to the tongue that had moved for years without expression. Thousands saw how with a word the speechless idiot had been made a sane man and heard Him utter words of generous thankfulness, and again the multitude marveled, saying, "No such things were ever done before by any one in Israel." But the Pharisees were ready with an explanation, and they went about among the crowd declaring, with blatant avowals, "He casteth out devils through the prince of devils." Jesus had answered this accusation more than once and confused his critics by their own admissions, but for want of a better explanation they continued still to use this one, to which Jesus did not make any further reply, as to have done so would be to repeat Himself and intensify a useless contention.

He is again Rejected at Nazareth.

The more that Jesus multiplied His noble deeds and increased His popularity with the people, the more earnest became His enemies in traducing Him, until utterances against Him were even made in the synagogue, where the rabbis vehemently declared that all His works were but instrumentalities of Satan, and His claims to Messiahship blasphemy of God. This boldness of the Pharisees however was not manifested until His appearance again in Nazareth, whither He went from Capernaum to attempt again to preach to His towns-people. He had believed that His works in the region of Gennesaret must have become known and authenticated in Nazareth, and that on His return to the place He would be accorded a hearty welcome. But the Nazarenes were no more receptive to His teachings than before, for they still regarded Him as a false pretender, an unbelief

which could not be overcome by deeds because He was known there in His youth and lowly condition, which to their minds made it impossible for Him to have developed Godly attributes, and they therefore refused to receive Him. Jesus marveled at their unbelief, but rather than enter into controversy with His own towns-people, after laying hands on and healing several of the sick who were brought to Him, He departed into another part of Galilee, where the people accepted Him with great enthusiasm, for in the country districts the influence of hostile rabbis was not felt so seriously.

As He made His third circuit of Galilee, crowds followed Him in greater number than before, and with such reverence and persistence that He found it necessary to make provision for better ministering unto them.

His Twelve Disciples sent forth by Twos.

The year or more which had now been spent by the disciples in attendant duties as the followers of Jesus was a period of preparation, during which they had been taught by illustration, by example, and by explanation, the requirements of true apostleship in the service of bringing souls to repentance and for the firm establishing of Christ's church and kingdom. They had been schooled also in adversity, and had learned to estimate the unyielding enmity, hostility and influence of the rabbis, Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and priests, who strove mightily to bring them into disrepute. Jesus therefore felt that their mental equipment was now complete for entering upon evangelistic labors among the people. He accordingly called them together and first conferring upon them power, which He had up to this time alone exercised—authority to cast out devils, and an enablement to heal the sick, and a control over all manner of sickness—He sent them forth by twos to preach the kingdom of God and to do works of mercy among the afflicted. He recognized the temperaments that were best fitted to work in unison, and appointed them in this wise: Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, were sent out together; then James and John, also brothers; Philip and Bartholomew (Nathanael); Thomas (Didymus) and Matthew; James the son of Alpheus, and Judas his brother, who was also called Lebbeus Thaddeus; Simon Zelotes and Judas Iscariot. In making this selection and appointing them by twos, who should conduct their mission jointly, Jesus had special regard for temperament to the end that they might work in sympathy. It would not do to thus associate two who were timorous and weak-spirited; or two who were querulous; or two who were super-sensitive; or two who were tempestuous. For even though all were men of great faith and strong convictions, and earnest in their avowals, yet there were some more faithful than others; some that were more temperate and forbearing than others. Jesus therefore associated His apostles with special regard for their personal attachments and their counteracting

dispositions, so that in their labors they would be balanced, or starting on converging lines they would be drawn to a common point in results.

But before sending them out He had a few parting instructions to give. As they were Jews, they must at first confine their labors to Galilee, rather than attempt to carry the gospel into Samaria or among the Gentiles. The seed which He had sown was now ripening, and the disciples must become the harvesters; the sheep were everywhere in Galilee, but they were scattered and among wolves and needed shepherds to bring them into the fold. But while laboring they must also watch, for enemies were everywhere about who would seek their ruin, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." That they might not be influenced by bribes, or promises of earthly reward, and become covetous, Jesus told them to provide nothing for their comfort or protection, nor to receive any gifts, but depend upon the charity of those among whom they preached. If any town rejected them they should shake the very dust of the ground off their feet as a sign of the supreme sinfulness of its people. If arrested or maltreated they were not to answer for themselves, but trust to God, who would reply for them; but they must flee from the persecutions offered them in one city and go directly into another, regarding such hardships as great favors, for their reward at last should be in proportion to the evil suffered for His sake. Fear not what the enemies might do, for the soul is beyond their power to harm. As God protects even the sparrow, so much more will He graciously regard those who confess Him before men. Even dissension that divides a household, if it proceed from one believing and another rejecting, must not be permitted to repress zeal for spreading the gospel, for "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me." They that received the disciples were to be rewarded the same as if they had received the Master; "and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward."

Having thus given His last instructions, the disciples took their leave and went in twos through the cities and towns preaching repentance, while Jesus resumed His ministrations among the people.

A Rocking Throne.

By this time the fame of Jesus had spread so far and His wondrous works and teachings were exerting such an influence upon the Galileans, that Herod became deeply concerned, and desired much to see Him. Many persons had believed that John was the reincarnated Elijah, and Herod now began to believe that this common report must be true. He had beheaded John; but if Elijah appeared from the dead, might it not be that he had risen from the executioner's axe not only to declare a new gospel, but to establish a new kingdom and to



THE TYPICAL EASTERN SHEPHERD, FROM WHOM THE SAVIOUR DREW SO MANY BEAUTIFUL SIMILES.

punish the offences of the nation? But Herod knew how superstitious were the people, and must have presently dismissed his forebodings, but he determined to at least set a watch upon Jesus, and would have accepted small pretext to order His arrest.

Jesus, however, was kept apprised of the fresh enmity of Herod by His friend Chuza, Herod's steward, and to avoid apprehension He met His disciples again, probably at Capernaum, and with them crossed over into the tetrarchy of Philip, seeking seclusion on the north shore of Lake Gennesaret. But though anxious for rest and privacy, where He could hear the report of His disciples, so closely was He followed by great crowds that His embarkment in a boat for

Bethsaida, or Batiha, was quickly noted. Many must have learned of His destination, for immediately every available boat was launched and filled with people determined to follow after, while those who could not go by water went along the shore on foot, or on horse, or donkey, or camel, the banks being covered with a moving army of believers, of curious, of sick, of distressed ; in disordered files, in broken ranks, in confused columns ; men, women and children ; old age keeping step with young paces, the diseased carried on pallets by strong arms, the weak and failing helped along by assisting hands, every one encouraged by the hope of soon meeting again with the Holy Teacher, the Omnipotent Healer.

The Miraculous Biscuit.

At last the prow of Jesus' boat touches shore, the sail is furled, the oars unshipped, and the line run out for anchorage. Weary, pale, overworked, the Master sees how He is being followed by crowds in boats, but He hardly reckons what a multitude is trudging along the shore in pursuit. He must have a few hours of privacy ; not only His half-exhausted nature demands it, but affairs of His church require that He should hold counsel with His disciples. So leaving the seaside He takes His apostles up into a mountain and holds audience with them. The Feast of the Passover was near at hand, and this celebration must have been talked of among them, and whether it were best to go down to Jerusalem and brave the dangers of such a visit, or to celebrate the feast there in the mountain, that they might not withdraw from the field where the harvest was so great and the laborers were so few.

After some hours of counsel with His disciples, Jesus came down from the mountain, and was confronted by a crowd of ten thousand persons who had sat about the shore of the lake impatient for His return, but whose reverent respect had prevented them from going up to His retreat to intrude upon His privacy. "And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep having no shepherd ; and He received them, and began to teach them many things, and spake unto them of the Kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing."

Jesus continued His loving ministration to the multitude until the day was so far spent that little time remained before night-fall, but yet He took no care of the passing hours, so bound up was He in His gracious labors. At length the disciples ventured to remind Him that they were in a desert place, and that if He did not send the crowd away, night would overtake them without food to feed any of the hungry ones. So anxious had the multitude been to reach Jesus that none of the people had thought to carry any provisions with them, and this army of improvidents was now in a state of half-famishment. There must have been ten



DRUSE PEASANTS OF MOUNT CARMEL AT THEIR REPAST.—From *The Christian Herald.*

thousand to feed, for Matthew says there were five thousand men, besides women and children.

How shall this great multitude be supplied? I see a selfish man in that crowd pulling a luncheon out of his own pocket, and saying: "Let the people starve. They had no business to come out here in the desert without any provisions. They are improvident, and the improvident ought to suffer." There is another man, not quite so heartless, who says: "Go up into the village and buy bread." What a foolish proposition. There is not enough in all the village for this crowd; besides, who has the money to pay for it? Xerxes' army, one million strong, was fed by a private individual of great wealth for only one day, but it broke him. Who then shall feed this multitude?

I see a man rising in that great crowd and asking: "Is there anyone here who has bread or meat?" A kind of moan goes through the whole throng. "No bread—no meat." But just at that time a lad steps up. You know when a great crowd goes off upon an excursion, there are always men and boys to go along for the purpose of merchandise and to strike a bargain; and so I suppose this boy had gone along for the purpose of merchandise; but he was nearly sold out, having only five loaves and two fishes left. The loaves were only biscuits, about the size of your fist. He is a generous boy and turns them over to Christ.

But these loaves would not feed twenty people, how much less ten thousand. Though the action was generous on the part of the boy, so far as satisfying the multitude it was a dead failure. When Jesus comes to the rescue, He is apt to come when there is a dead lift. He commands the people that they sit down "in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties," as much as to say: "Order! order! so that none be missed." It was fortunate that that arrangement was made; otherwise, at the very first appearance of bread, the strong ones would have clutched it, while the feeble and the modest would have gone unsupplied.

I suppose it was no easy work to get the crowd seated, for they all wanted to be in the front row, lest the bread give out before their turn should come. No sooner are they seated than there comes a great hush over all the people. Jesus stands there, His light complexion and auburn locks illumined by the setting sun. Every eye is on Him. They wonder what He will do next. He takes one of the loaves that the boy furnished and breaks off a piece, which immediately grows to as large a size as the original loaf, the original loaf staying as large as it was before the piece was broken off. And they leaned forward with intense scrutiny, saying: "Look! look!" When some one, anxious to see more minutely what was going on, rises in front, they cry: "Sit down in front! Let us look for ourselves!"

And when the bread is passed around, they taste of it skeptically and inquiringly, as much as to say: "Is it bread? Really, is it bread?" Yes, the best

that was ever made, for Christ made it. Bread for the first fifty and the second fifty. Bread for the first hundred and for the second hundred. Bread for the first thousand and for the second thousand. Pass it all around the circle: there, where that old man sits leaning on his staff, and where that woman sits with the child in her arms. Pass it all around. Are you all fed? "Ay! ay!" One basket would have held the loaves before the miracle; it takes twelve now! No wonder that the people were amazed, and that they said: "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world."

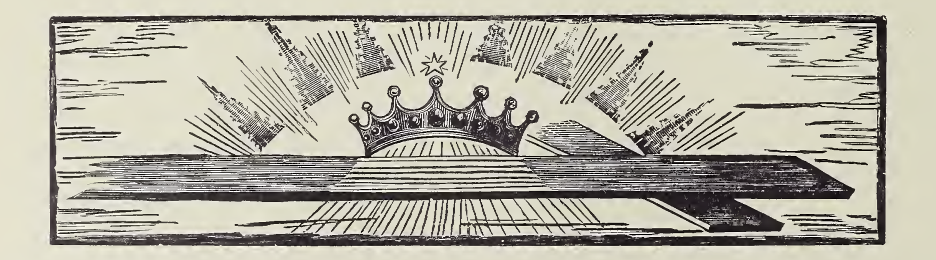
Pavements of Crystal.

After miraculously feeding the multitude, Jesus was in such favor with the people that they conceived the idea of taking Him by force to make Him king, knowing that His aversion to worldly honors would cause Him to decline with displeasure any proposal to raise Him to such earthly dignity. To escape the crowd, therefore, He sent His disciples back to Capernaum in a boat, while He retired alone into a mountain to pray. The disciples had lingered about Bethsaida, thinking that Jesus would return to them before night-fall, but as the shades of evening deepened they gave over this hope and started for Capernaum, leaving their Lord alone to His communings in the mountain fastnesses. The disciples pulled away from the shore in confidence, for they were nearly all practiced boatmen, but directly upon starting, a furious storm arose, such as sweep down upon Gennesaret with the fury of a demon and the suddenness of an attack out of ambush. Away went the sail, if the boat had one, and the wind-lashed waters rose up until they showed their whitened crests like gravestones, and their darkened swirls like sepulchres. The oars became almost useless, for strain and pull and dip, were counteracted by lash and beat of billow. So wild was the storm, so tempestuous the waves, that though Capernaum was scarce four miles from Bethsaida, after nearly eight hours of toilsome and energetic rowing the Apostles were still two miles from their destination. Through the gloom of night, perhaps by lightning torch, or divine radiance, the exhausted disciples descry an object moving over the tossing waves; first like a misty vision, then like a shadowy form, until it approached nearer, and they perceive that it is a human form walking on the maddened waters, with step as firm, with gait as steady, with concern as indifferent, as though moving along a pathway through ripening fields.

In the mind of anyone such a vision would inspire alarm, and even though the Apostles had seen many remarkable things transcending natural laws, they were now afraid. But their tremblings and disquiet were quickly stilled by a cheerful voice ringing like a benediction above the dash of waves, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." Thus did Jesus reveal Himself to His tired and

terror-stricken Apostles, and they hailed Him now not only as their Master, but as a deliverer who could bind the winds and fold up the beating waves and give them safe and speedy passage to Capernaum. In loving enthusiasm Peter cried out to Jesus, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water," and He said, "Come." Peter leaped out of the boat onto the solid wave that bore him up, and started towards Christ, but beside him rolled up the angry waters in such mad threatenings that Peter's faith began to fade, and as it diminished his feet sank lower and lower at each step, until in despair he cried, "Lord, save me." The appeal was not in vain, for Christ gave him His hand and lifting Him up, said, by way of rebuke for his lack of confidence, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased, and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure and wonder.

When Xerxes resolved upon invading Greece he bridged the Dardanelles with boats to afford passage for his army of nearly two million men; but a storm destroyed the pontoons, which so enraged him that he ordered fetters to be thrown into the sea in his senseless effort to bind it, and then commanded three hundred men to lash the tempestuous waters with chains by way of punishment. But the waves gave no heed to his passion, nor did his impotent rage curb their wild and destructive dashings. Canute was powerful enough to hold Denmark and to conquer England, but when he sat by the seaside and commanded the incoming tide to approach no closer to his chair, the rolling waves poured their flood upon the sands with recurring encroachment and would have seized him, powerful king that he was, with their deadly arms, and carried him into the sepulchre of the deep, had he not retreated before their resistless advance. But Jesus, clothed in humility and insensible to the flattery of man, with no earthly possessions, a companion of poverty, and whose friendships were among the afflicted, the poor, the accused and the rejected, was yet mightier than all earthly kings, for the sea and the winds were His slaves.



CHAPTER XX.

MIGHTY SERMON AT CAPERNAUM.

RETURNING from Bethsaida to Capernaum, a rough and weary way as I found, taking it afoot last December, Jesus seems to have secured a little rest before the multitude that He dismissed, after miraculously feeding them, discovered His departure from the mountain into which He went to pray. The crowd had remained all night about Bethsaida, anxiously awaiting His reappearing, but with their patience finally exhausted by hunger and exposure—for the village could not supply so large a number with food and shelter—they returned to Capernaum the following day. Their surprise at learning that Jesus had preceded them was so great that upon finding Him they asked, with affectation of incredulity, "Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?" perhaps supposing that His sudden reappearance, as they believed it to be, was made by miraculous means.

The multitude was now besieging Him again, so that Jesus seized the occasion to rebuke the people for their exhibitions of idle curiosity, and their lack of faith in Him as a spiritual teacher: "Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." He thereupon gave them a discourse of warning against the desires of the flesh—"that meat which perisheth"—and exhorted them to subordinate their material longings to cravings for spiritual enlightenment—"the meat which endureth to life everlasting."

The people, not fully understanding Him, or captious in their curiosity, asked, "What sign shewest Thou then, that we may see and believe Thee. What dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat." Here was the same caviling spirit that arose so many times before to confront Him, and which He rebuked so severely as He did now. The Pharisees, seeking to disparage Him in the estimation of His followers, now treated Him cavalierly, by asking Him to prove His equality or superiority to Moses by the performance of other miracles. They saw that the purpose of Christ was specific, and that all His works were means to a certain end, for which reason He would not put forth examples of His power merely to gratify the vulgar appetite of unsympathetic, not to say hostile, critics, for to have done so would have been to desecrate the attributes of Deity, by making

God to appear as ambitious to secure the applause of men. But He shows the superior quality of the spiritual bread that giveth life to the world.

The Bread of Life.

Thinking that Christ spoke of a material bread, the eating of which would confer perpetual life, the people begged eagerly that He would bestow upon them such a priceless gift, for while they rejected Him, still they had seen Him work wonders and were selfish enough to anxiously beseech Him for favors which only God could grant. The miracles which He did before them were incontrovertible proofs of supernatural power, but these the influence of the rabbis was able to largely discredit by such appeals to the people as these: "We know that a Messiah is promised us, and that His coming is near at hand, but when He comes no one shall know Him, and He will be clothed not only with power, but with the appearance of an avenging God who will purge Israel of her enemies, and will raise up Judah to rulership over all the earth." This conception of the Messiah, as before described, was the hope and belief of all Jewry, and so long had it been a part of the Jewish life, taught by lesson, tradition, prophecy and appeals, that not even the disciples themselves could wholly divest themselves of it. Therefore when in reply to the request for that bread which would give eternal life, Jesus answered that He Himself was the bread sent down from heaven, the Jews began to rail at Him, saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?"

Jesus having condescended to answer the carpings of those who were already waiting to condemn Him, had regard also for those among His hearers who were susceptible to instruction, and He therefore gave them further exposition of His sayings, that they might be able to distinguish the necessities of the spiritual as well as of the temporal life. "Verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Astounding Faithlessness.

At these declarations the murmuring rose to revilings, in which even many of Jesus' followers joined, but why they did not understand that the words "bread" and "blood" were used metaphorically to express the indwelling spirit, the spiritual life, it is hard to explain. As a learned writer says, "The idea of eating, as a metaphor for receiving spiritual benefit, was familiar to Christ's



JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG MAN.—Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

hearers, and was as readily understood as our expressions, 'devouring a book,' or 'drinking in instructions.'" The rabbis referred to their laws in the same manner, so that these metaphorical terms may be said to have been in common use, and their application could not have been misunderstood except as they conflicted with preconceived opinions. Some there were who comprehended the teaching, but the rabbis were industrious in declaring that Jesus spoke in a literal sense, and their influence was sufficient to excite the doubts of many disciples, who in their turn said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it," or paraphrased, "These sayings are self-conflicting; they are contradictory and unexplainable." It is possible that they seriously doubted His mental responsibility, knowing the great and unrelaxed strain His mind had been constantly subjected to for probably two years. This is at least the most charitable explanation of the doubts of His disciples.

Some of the Disciples Abandon Him.

Seeing how some of His disciples had become disaffected, Jesus turned to them and said, "Doth this offend you? What if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not." Even these words failed to quicken their comprehension, for "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

How truly were Christ's words as to the requirements for discipleship thus proven. In the light of this exhibition of human weakness before worldly power and influence, we can plainly see why many who sought Him for appointment to discipleship were rejected; His insight into human nature, His knowledge of every heart that was before Him; His divine estimate of those who came crying "Lord, Lord," enabled Him to detect the firm from the yielding; the good from the bad; the faithful from the time-serving. But if many disciples turned away from Him in the hour of conflict, the apostles clung to Him in abiding confidence and love. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Faithful Peter! enemies cannot frighten, adversity cannot cast down, calumny and persecution cannot swerve him from his loyal purpose, nor alienate him from his Lord. No surprise that upon such a rock Christ should build His Church; no surprise that to such a faithful servant the keys of the everlasting Kingdom should be entrusted; no surprise that Peter is on the right hand of the Saviour. It was a great satisfaction, a joyous consolement to Jesus, that He should be answered with such evidence of devotion; yet among these

twelve He knew there was one who had no part in these loyal sentiments, who was indeed a wolf in the fold, who would at last betray Him.

Outer Cleanliness but Inner Defilement.

The enemies of Jesus had now a temporary triumph, and they would push their advantage. Many Pharisees and scribes had been sent up from Jerusalem to sow seeds of disbelief among the people that were attracted and being converted to the new faith—that faith founded by Jesus upon deeds of mercy rather than upon mere outward showing and ostentatious professions. There had now succeeded to His large following of earnest believers a wide-spread disaffection which was growing apace, started and urged forward by the rabbinical class, and gaining fresh impetus at every conflict. But even after the desertion of many disciples, Jesus still retained a considerable following, and it was therefore considered advisable by the Pharisees to continue their tactics of casting imputations upon His motives, and making open charges of blasphemy against Him for claiming to be the Messiah while violating both law and custom. Therefore availing themselves of every pretext to expose Him to the people for His opposition to the rabbis, and observing many of His disciples eating with unwashed hands, they flew at once to Jesus, and holding Him accountable for the acts of His followers, pompously asked Him, "Why walk not Thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" He had answered this inquiry more than once before, and therefore with apparently wasted patience He now replied in the vigorous words of Isaiah: "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their hearts are far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the traditions of men, as the washing of pots, and cups, and brazen vessels, and tables." Or in other words, "Ye loud-mouthed hypocrites, who expend your worship in outward forms of ceremonial purity, who are sticklers for prescribed customs, who show forth in ostentatious manners to gain the applause of men, who assume to discharge all your moral obligations by washings, and fasts, and Sabbath observances, and go about bedizened with phylacteries, and caps and robes! Ye shufflers, dissemblers and mountebanks, that make of your religion a cloak with which to cover your moral deformity and hide your earthly ambitions! Ye wash the backs of your hands while the palms remain full of defilements; ye wash your bodies, leaving your hearts overflowing with impurity; ye wash your feet, but continue in the way of all evil. Why, in practice, you do not even have regard for that commandment which enjoins you to 'Honor thy father and thy mother;' ye are like the blind leading the blind." Then said Jesus to the multitude: "Hearken unto Me every one of you, and understand. There is

nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

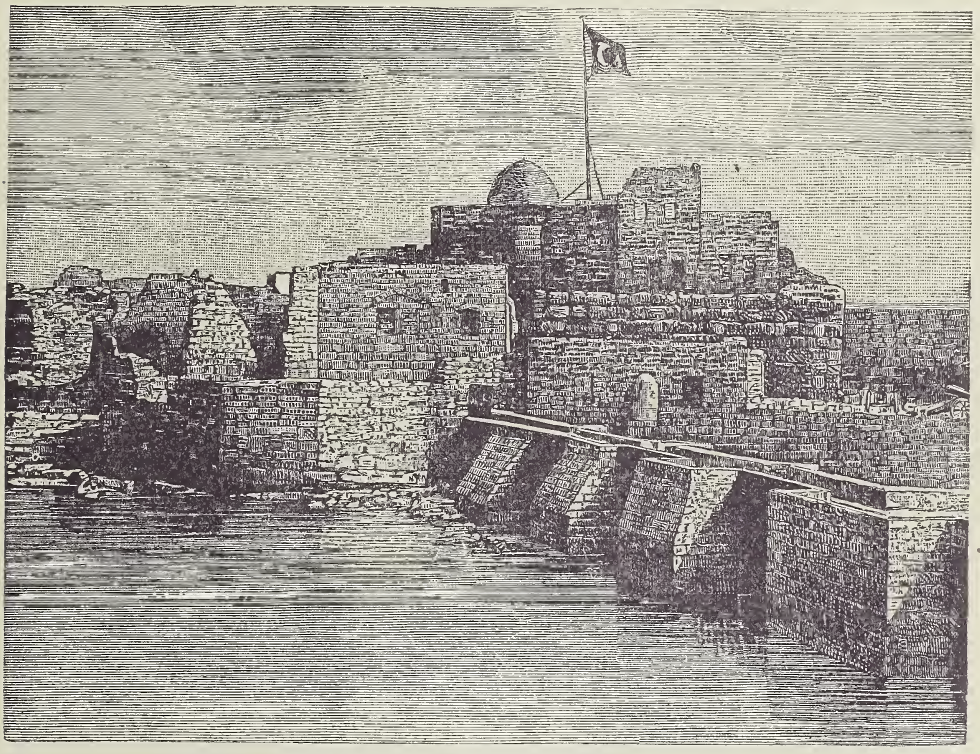
At this severe rebuke and outwitting the Pharisees and scribes grew so angry that even the disciples seem to have become alarmed, for nothing save fear could have prompted them to say to Him, "Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?" But Peter appears to have been really so obtuse that either he failed to comprehend the full purport of Christ's words, or else he was anxious to learn what justification Jesus had to make for the severity of His reproachment of the Pharisees; hence when Christ returned to Peter's house the latter said to Him, "Declare unto us this parable," or "Give us an explanation of your words." And Jesus said, "Are ye also without understanding? Is it possible that you require an interpretation of My sayings, which have such manifest significance? Do ye not understand, that whatever entereth the mouth from without, cannot defile him; because it entereth not into the heart. That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, false witness, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within and defile the man, but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man." Peter must have been satisfied with the expounding; and the Pharisees had such full comprehension of the sayings, which were accusations against their hypocrisy, that their hostility arose to vengefulness and threatenings against Christ's life. And "Jesus would walk no more in Jewry because the Jews sought to kill Him."

Seeking Rest Among the Heathen.

Whatever the Pharisees thought of Him, whatever the railleries, the gibes and the accusings flung at Him, Jesus did not lose any of His popularity as an attraction to the masses. Whatever the influence under which He operated, His deeds were merciful and beneficent. Whether His power was of Beelzebub or of God, the people knew it was omnipotent, and that at His touch or word perfect health came to the dying, and all manner of disease and afflictions were cast out. And hence the crowds may have shown a disbelief of His Messiahship, but they did not diminish. Morning, noon and night the multitude followed Him, or stood waiting with anxiety His reappearing, the sick, the helpless, the deformed, hovering about His presence in hope, or leaping with joy at His touch of restoration. His ceaseless ministrations must have been dreadfully exhausting, for, taking upon Himself the physical weaknesses of man, like a man He hungered, thirsted and became weary.

But where can Jesus, with such fame for doing mighty works, find rest?

Not in Galilee, where the crowds gave Him no surcease from labor ; not in Judah, where His life was threatened ; not in Samaria, where Jews were objects of hostility. Being unable to secure repose while among any of His race, Jesus decides to go over to Tyre and Sidon, and trust Himself with the Canaanites, who, perhaps, had not yet heard of Him and who would therefore permit Him to remain in retirement. "And from thence Jesus arose and went into the borders of Tyre



PRESENT APPEARANCE OF ANCIENT FORTIFICATIONS AT SIDON.

and Sidon, and went into an house, and would have no man know it ; but He could not be hid."

Faith of the Syrophœnician Woman.

Fame travels on the wings of day and night ; such fame as His outstripped the winds that blow from whence to everywhere. Scarcely had He touched the boundary of the Gentile provinces when "behold a woman of Canaan, who was a Greek, a Syrophœnician by nation, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, came out of the same coasts and fell at His feet ; and cried unto Him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David ; my

daughter is grievously vexed with a devil!" This woman was a mother, and she had an afflicted daughter. The child had a virulent, exasperating, convulsive disease, called the possession of the devil. The mother was just like other mothers; she had no peace as long as her child was sick. She was a Gentile, and the Jews had such a perfect contempt for the Gentiles that they called them dogs. Nevertheless, she comes to Christ, and asks His help in her family troubles. Christ makes no answer. The people are afraid there is going to be a "scene," and they try to get the woman out of Christ's presence; but He forbids her expulsion. Then she falls down and repeats her request. Christ, to rally her earnestness, and to make His mercy finally more conspicuous, addresses her, saying, "It is not meet to take the children's bread"—that is, the salvation appointed for the Jews—"and cast it to dogs"—the Gentiles.

The whole land of Palestine is to-day, as it was in the time of Christ, filled with mean curs; they are foul and vermin-covered, and snarly, and the most contemptuous thing that could be said to any one was to call him a dog. It seems as if the sagacity of the dog had not been discovered in those days. Job gives him a kick in his thirtieth chapter. Abishai said, in regard to David, "Shall this dead dog curse the king?" Goliath said to David, "Am I a dog, that thou comest out against me with stones?" Hazael, wishing to depict his hatred for some kind of sin, said, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Paul, writing to the Philippians, tried to set forth the danger of consorting with certain persons, and said, "Beware of dogs." John, in Revelations, describing the fact that the abandoned and dissolute and the sinful shall be thrust out of heaven, says, "Without are dogs."

But Christ did not mean to characterize that woman as a dog. That would have been most unlike Him, who from the cross said, "Behold thy mother." His whole life so gentle and so loving, He could not have given it out as His opinion that that was what she ought to be called; but He was only employing the ordinary parlance in regard to the Gentiles. Yet that mother was not to be put off, pleading as she was for the life of her daughter; she was not to be rebuffed, she was not to be discouraged. She says, "Yea, Lord, I acknowledge I am a Gentile dog, but I remember that even the dogs have some privileges, and when the door is open they slink in and crawl under the table, and when the bread or the meat sifts through the cracks of the table, or falls off the edge of it, they pick it up, and the master of the house is not angry with them. I don't ask for a big loaf; I don't ask for even a big slice; I only ask for that which drops down through the chinks of the table—the dog's portion. It is the crumbs I am after." Christ felt the wit and the earnestness and the stratagem and the faith of that woman. He turns upon her and says, "You have conquered me; your daughter is well now."

There I see the mother going. She feels twenty years younger. Though getting on in life she goes with a half-run. Amidst an outburst of hysterical laughter and tears they meet. The mother breaks down every time she tries to tell it; the daughter with cheeks as rosy as before she fell in the first fit; the doctors of the village prophesying that the cure will not last, because it was not according to their prescription. But I read in the oldest medical journal of the world, "The daughter was made whole from that very hour."

This is the only time that we find Jesus with His back turned. That woman came to Him and said, "Lord, spare the life of my child; it will not cost you anything." Jesus turns His back. He throws positive discouragement upon her petition. Jesus stood with His face to blind Bartimeus, and the foaming demoniac, and the limping paralytic, and the sea when He hushed it, and the grave when He broke it; but now He turns His back. I asked an artist if he ever saw a representation of Jesus Christ with His back turned. He said, No. And it is a fact that you may go through all the picture galleries of London and Dresden and Rome and Florence and Naples, and you will find Christ with full-face and profile, but never with His back turned. Yet here, in this passage, he turned away from the woman. But mercy postponed is mercy augmented. If the waters of the soul come to the flood-tide, they will break away the dam. If the arrow-head be drawn clear back to the bow, it is only that it may be projected farther. If Christ turn His back to any one, it is only that the dawn on His face may be more effulgent. What were the five minutes in which this Syrophœnician woman stood in bitterness behind Jesus, compared with more than eighteen hundred years in which she has rejoiced before him? "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Many a man has put his hand over his shoulder to find the cross, and lo, it was gone; but in bringing his hand back again, he has struck the crown on his head, radiant with pardon and glory.

Jesus conquered by a human soul! That woman said, "Take this disease away from my daughter." Christ responded to her, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." Then she aroused her soul into an acuteness of expression seldom equaled by poet or painter, or orator or satirist, when she said, "Yea, Lord, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then He turned, and flung pardon and healing and help into her soul with the words, "O woman! great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." You have seen Him on the white horse of victory, all heaven following Him on white horses, in His right hand the drawn sword of universal dominion; the moon under His feet, the stars His tiara; the sun only the rocket shot up in the signal-service of His great host; burning worlds only the bonfires of His victory. But now see Him surrender—faith, humility and prayer triumphant.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEMENTIA AND HUNGER IN DECAPOLIS.

EVERYWHERE that Jesus went the multitudes followed Him. If He escaped the crowds of one city, His reappearance in another was a signal for a new gathering; but was it not one of the wise providences that it should be so? If we follow Him now in faith, how much stronger must have been the temptations to follow Him in person. Nor is it supposable that He desired that it should be otherwise. His friends used all their persuasive influence to induce Him to cease His labors for a while, and He may have sought retirement out of deference to their anxious requests, but though faint from weariness, Jesus was ever overflowing with mercy and must have found the greatest unrest when separated from the crowds that needed His gracious ministrations.

Having probably passed through several towns of Phœnicia, and certainly visiting Tyre and Sidon, the two largest cities on the Mediterranean coast, Jesus left the latter place and traveled south-eastwardly along the Lebanon Mountains and over the natural archway that bridges the Leontes, through the upper Jordan valley, under the Hermon range, and by Cæsarea Philippi, on to the uplands of Gaulonitis, and thence down the Jordan valley to the east coast of Gennesaret, in Decapolis. How long He was in making this circuit from Capernaum on the west bank of the lake, or what were the works that He performed, none of the Gospel writers inform us, but so great were His deeds everywhere, that the full importance of them all seems to have been overlooked, for which reason a very small part of our Lord's labors is recorded.

The first visit Jesus made to Decapolis was accompanied by a merciful act in healing a demoniac, but His reception by the Gadarenes was so inhospitable that He scarcely more than stood upon the coast of the country. Decapolis was a part of Palestine, but ten of its principal cities had resisted the efforts of the Jews who tried repeatedly to capture them after their return from Babylonish captivity. These were called the ten allied free cities, from whence the name *Decapolis* is derived. These cities, Pliny tells us, were Scythopolis, Raphana, Gadara, Gerosa, Hippos, Philadelphia, Damascus, Pella, Canatha and Dion. They all lay east of the Jordan. The region was immensely populous in the time of Christ, but much of it to-day is a deserted wilderness which even wild animals refuse to inhabit. On account of the sturdy resistance of the ten cities, which were joined



NATURAL BRIDGE ACROSS THE LEONTES, OVER WHICH JESUS PASSED IN HIS JOURNEYINGS.

together by defensive and offensive alliances, the Jews held the Decapolitans in great contempt and called them heathen; but the inhabitants were chiefly Romans, with a mixture of Syrians and Babylonians, and the religion there practiced was that of paganism.

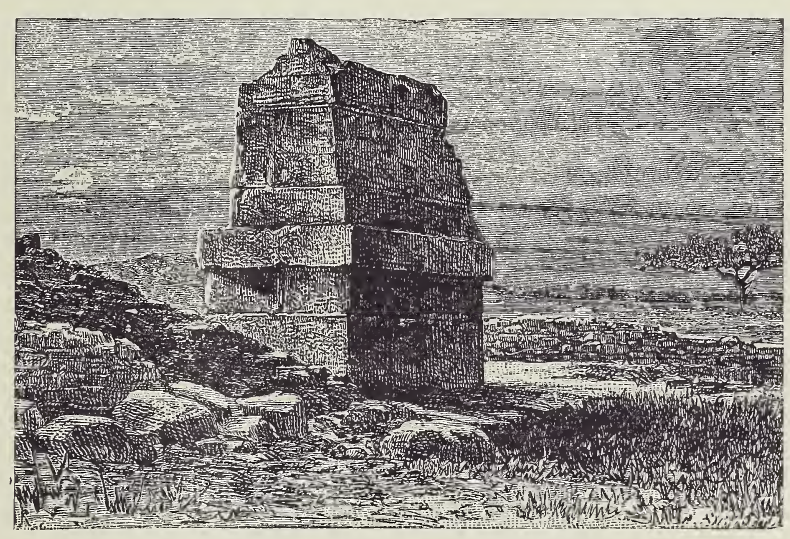
Healing the Blind and Feeding the Multitude.

In this country Jesus may have hoped to find some quiet that was denied Him elsewhere, though it is quite as reasonable to believe that His visit there was made in pursuance of the divine purpose to preach salvation to the heathen. But if He sought rest here His expectation was not fulfilled, for His fame had preceded Him and almost immediately He found Himself surrounded by a multitude as great as that which besieged Him in Galilee. The people, it would seem, came not so much to hear Him as to seek His aid as the omnipotent physician, for His audiences were largely composed of sick, dumb, blind and crippled, until the mountain top on which He sat, overlooking the sea of Galilee, was fairly covered with afflicted humanity. The gospel account of the miracles which He performed here are very limited; of the great number brought to Him seeking restoration from their misfortune, only one is mentioned: that of a man who was not only deaf but also had an impediment in his speech. When the unfortunate came for healing, Jesus took him aside from the crowd and putting His fingers into the patient's ears, and then moistening His finger-tip and applying it to the man's tongue, He uttered the words "Be opened," when lo! the gates of his ears swung open to let in the hearing so long shut out, and the tongue found its cunning that had so long been bridled with paralysis. Not only could the recovered man now hear the teachings of his benefactor, but his tongue was loosed to give praise for the blessing bestowed.

Following this miracle, Jesus performed many others equally wonderful, "insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel."

Every day the fame of these remarkable healings spread farther and farther, and the great gathering of the people continued increasing until the region about could not supply provisions to feed so large an assemblage. But hunger could not drive them away from the Teacher, Master and Saviour. The situation became at length so critical that Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with Me three days, and have nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way, for divers of them came from far." But to this the disciples replied, "Why, Lord, how shall so great a multitude as four thousand men, besides women and children, be fed here in the wilderness, when

we have but seven loaves and a few little fishes?" Jesus therefore commanded the gathering to sit down on the ground, while He took up the loaves and giving thanks He broke them into pieces and gave the broken portions to His disciples whom He commanded to feed the people. Likewise did Jesus bless the fishes and these He also ordered His disciples to set before the hungry concourse. Wonderful miracle! The broken pieces multiplied themselves more than a thousand fold, and the few little fishes increased in number until however appetizing they were, and however famished was that great crowd after a fast of three days, yet there was more than all that vast multitude could eat. What a great picnic was there held on the mountain-side, what a delightful basket-dinner, in which hunger was not only appeased but opportunity extended to enjoy the presence of Jesus, who gave the feast, and when all had eaten, and every hungry mouth had been filled to satiety, the more provident in the crowd gathered up the fragments of the dinner and found that they filled seven baskets.



TOMB OF KING HIRAM, NEAR TYRE.

Jesus Refuses to give a Sign.

After miraculously feeding the people, Jesus and His disciples took boat and crossed over to the west side of the lake, landing at or near the town of Magdala, or properly Magdalan. This place derives its chief notoriety from having been the residence of the penitent woman who anointed Jesus at the feast given by Simon. She was therefore called Mary Magdalene. But the word which applies to the place is very similar to a Jewish term, *megaddela*, used to designate a person wearing plaited hair, which was a custom especially common among women of evil morals, so that it is by an association of term and place that Mary Magdalene has been regarded as a fallen woman, and with no better reason. The village

of Magdalan is now about the most indecent place in Palestine. Apparel is for the most part discarded.

Jesus may have expected to meet here the penitent woman whom He so graciously absolved, or He may have sought rest in one of the villages thereabout, but if either was His purpose He must have been disappointed, for almost as His foot touched shore a crowd gathered about Him, among the number being many Sadducees, who began at once to open a controversy by asking Him to show them a sign from heaven whereby to prove His Messiahship. They no doubt reminded Him of the current beliefs respecting good and bad spirits that peopled the air, by whose aid those in league with them were able to perform many surprising things, and laid great force on the miracles which Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Samuel had done, proving them to have been instruments of God. "Now," said they, "if you are the Messiah, or one sent before to prepare His way, give us a sign from heaven as a testimony to Your pretentions." But Jesus would not be tempted; besides, He knew that if works and merciful deeds and teachings failed to convince them, signs, of whatever character, would be equally unavailing. With a touch of ridicule He therefore turned upon His critics and accused them of professing great knowledge respecting the weather, which they predicted by signs in the sky, and yet they disregarded the more striking signs of the times, the portents of a coming Messiah and the evidences so overwhelming of His manifestation and presence.

The Leaven of the Pharisees.

The prejudices against Him were here so strong that Jesus went again into a boat with His disciples and sailed for the opposite shore, in the province of Philip, where He would be safer than in the Galilean district. In departing, His disciples neglected to lay in any provisions, so that they had with them only a single loaf of bread. When they reached the other side, at Bethsaida, but probably before debarking, Jesus charged them to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, and of the leaven of Herod." But they did not understand Him, thinking that He intended to reprove them for neglecting to provide bread for their journey. Seeing their confusion over the false interpretation of His words, Jesus denounced with indignation their obtuseness and lack of faith, and asked how they could be doubtful of His ability and disposition to provide bread for their needs after having witnessed the feeding of the multitude on two occasions from a few loaves of bread and fishes. It was not the leaven of material bread that they were to beware of, "but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Jesus had seen how, under the revilings and carpings of the Pharisees and scribes, some of His disciples had turned away from Him at Capernaum, and He thus gave warning against attempts which would no

doubt be made to alienate His followers in the land to which they had now come, for they must expect that His enemies would beset them wherever they went.

Sight for the Blind Man.

As Jesus stepped out of the boat at Bethsaida, He was surrounded by a crowd of people, for wherever He went great numbers flocked about Him craving His divine aid. Among those who sought His assistance was a blind man that was brought to Him by some friends who begged Christ to touch the unfortunate. It thus appears clear that the people had associated the touch of Jesus with a marvelous virtue, and that they believed His healing was performed rather through the potentiality of a gift of healing than by the Divine power that was in Him; others thought that He restored the afflicted by the employment of magic art and incantation, as many had pretended to do before Him. To destroy this impression, Jesus proceeded to effect His cures by the use of different outward means to show that no prescribed forms governed His actions. Therefore,

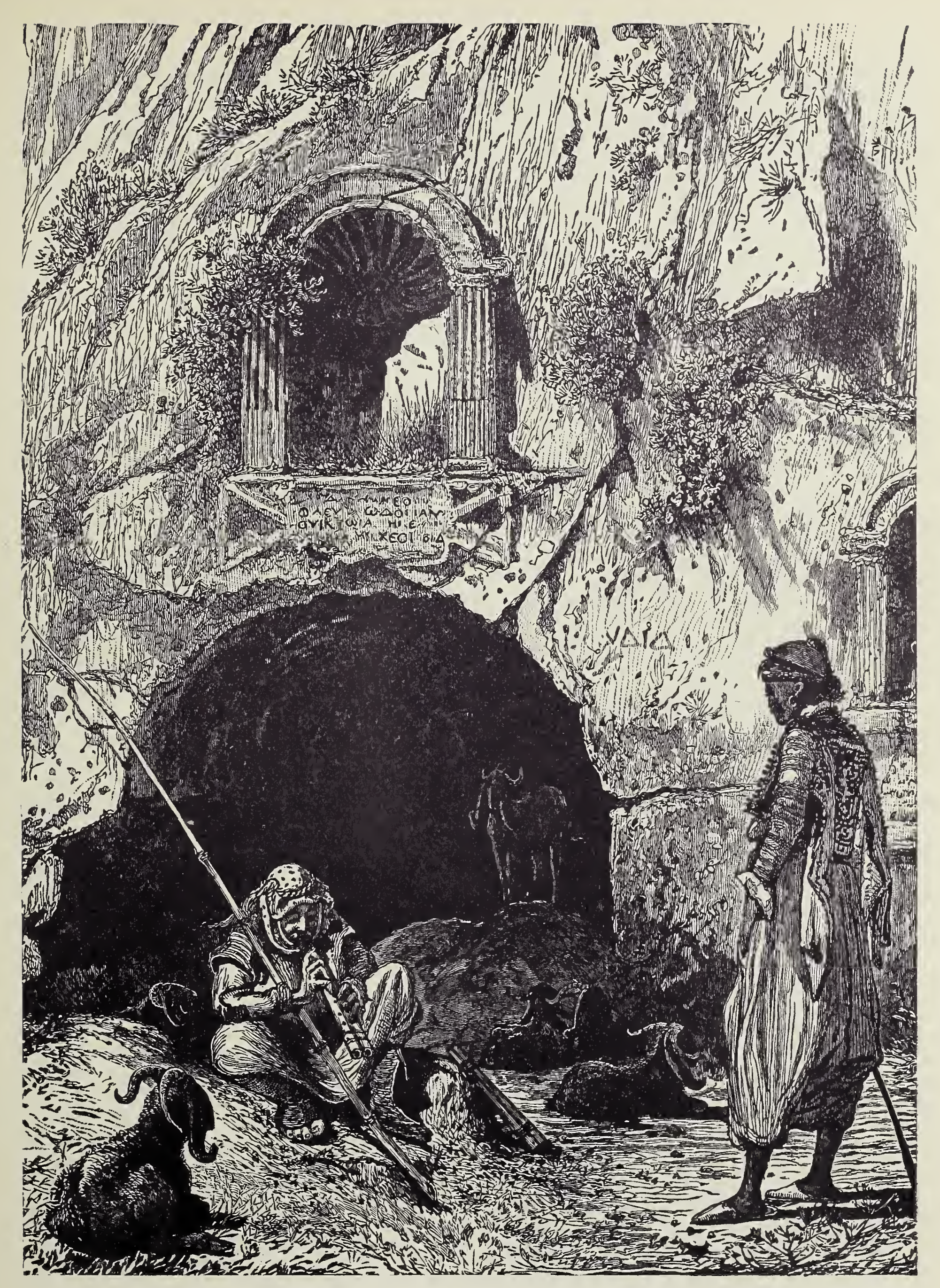


JESUS LEADING THE BLIND MAN OUT OF THE TOWN.

when the blind man was brought to Him, instead of immediately opening His eyes, as He might have done, Jesus led the afflicted one out of the town, probably to the better arouse His spiritual insight, and when alone He spat upon the sealed eyes and then putting His hands upon him asked the blind man if he could see. The restoration was only partial, for the afflicted one looked up and said, "I see men as trees walking." But Jesus certainly had a purpose in employing two efforts to complete the miracle; He no doubt gave him according to the measure of his faith. If at first the man had hope, Jesus did enough for him to excite his faith, and when faith took the place of hope Jesus touched his eyes and the man saw clearly, so that belief superseded faith. But instead of working these beneficent deeds to procure the applause and gratitude of the world, Jesus did them purely as acts of mercy, with no desire for reward or popularity. Thus when He restored the blind man He sent him away to his house saying, "Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any one in the town."

Cæsarea Philippi and its Beauteous Situation.

From Bethsaida Jesus and His disciples journeyed northward to Cæsarea Philippi, which was located not far from the northeastern boundary of Decapolis. The city had been rebuilt, three years before the birth of Christ, by Philip, upon the site of a very ancient town called, in honor of the Canaanitish god, Baal-Gad, and was renamed out of flattery for Augustus Cæsar, and to which his own name was added to distinguish the city from Cæsarea on the Mediterranean coast. Immediately before its reconstruction in a style of great splendor, the place was known as Panais (now Banais), which was given it in honor of the shepherd god Pan, worshiped by the Greeks, to whom a cave near by, and out of which the head waters of the Jordan gush, was sacred. In this sylvan district the first Grecian immigrants settled, and finding a cave at the base of Mount Hermon, in the extremity of the Jordan valley, with the most romantic and picturesque surroundings, they dedicated it as a sanctuary to their sylvan deity, which Herod recognized by erecting there a magnificent temple of white marble in deification of his emperor, thus uniting Roman with the Greek admiration and glorification of the place. On one of the fallen pillars of that Herodic temple we sat and lunched our last day in Palestine. Hanno says: "This cave lies immediately behind a raised yet retired nook or hollow among the hills, and immediately beneath a conical height of more than 1000 feet, rising between two of those deep ravines which run up into the great mountain, upon the summit of which there now stand the noblest ruins that the whole country around exhibits, equal in extent, if not in grandeur to those of Heidelberg—the ruins of the castle of Zubeibeh. Immediately beneath the entrance into the cave—along a breadth of more than 100 feet—there gush forth from among the stones a thousand bubbling



CAVE DEDICATED TO THE WORSHIP OF PAN.

rills, coming from some hidden fountain-head, and from their long dark subterranean journey springing all joyously together into the light of day, forming at once by their union a stream which is one of the chief sources of the Jordan." The district is one of the most fruitful in all Palestine, as well as affording the grandest view of mountain, hill, valley, cañon, caves, rivers, fountains and fertile fields of pomegranates, olives, vines, fig-trees, and grain, that human eye ever rested upon.

Jesus at Cæsarea Philippi.

To this magnificent region Jesus directed His footsteps, followed by His disciples, who, like Himself, had become objects of popular hatred through the imputations, accusations and revilings of the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and rabbis, who had suppressed their differences to make common war on Christ. As they journeyed northward Jesus became reflective, pondering upon the hatreds and mad ambitions of the world, of the suffering which He had relieved, the truths which He had declared, the salvation which He had promised, the fulfilment of prophecies upon which the hopes, the aspirations, the faith of the nation had for ages been concentrated, and of His rejection, His calumniation, His peril. The people knew Him as a worker of wonders, a just man, a living example of humility and mercy, but they knew Him not as God. In this mood He turned to His heavenly Father and prayed, as was His practice whenever the burdens of depression from realization of the wrongs He suffered were heaviest, and while thus seeking solace from God He was interrupted by the disciples coming to Him. From prayer He turned to questioning them, asking, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" and they answered, "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some say Elias, and others say Jeremias, or one of the old prophets risen again." All this Jesus well knew, but He desired to test the faith of His followers, and therefore He asked again, "But whom say ye that I am?" Whereupon Peter, as spokesman for all the disciples, with a burst of faith and devotion, replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Up to this time, while frequently intimating His Messiahship, He had not directly declared His divinity except to the Samaritan woman, and once by assent to the Apostles, but now He spoke clearly by open announcement, saying, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And as a reward for the faithfulness displayed, Jesus told Peter that He would make His faith the foundation of His church which shall endure forever, and that His disciples should also be the foundation stones, and their works its superstructure, but He charged them to tell no one that He was the Christ.



SOURCES OF THE JORDAN BENEATH THE CAVE OF PAN.

Jesus Rebukes Peter.

Having received expressions of their devout faith, Jesus became more confidential with his disciples and now took occasion to reveal not only the full purpose of His mission on earth but explained to them what a sacrifice, in expiatory offering for the sins of the world, He would at last have to make: plainly telling them that He must go to Jerusalem, where He would not only be rejected as the Messiah, but be subjected to abuse and in the end to execution by His enemies, though on the third day thereafter He would be raised from the dead.

Peter, who was an impetuous, impulsive and emotional man, whose devotion would lead him to any extremity at the call of distress, could not withhold expression of his fervor as a friend and follower of the Lord, and he therefore threatened to interpose his efforts to prevent the fulfillment of Christ's rueful prophecy: "Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.'" He had not yet understood Jesus, nor His purpose, looking always to the material rather than the spiritual salvation of Israel, and regarded Jesus as that power which was not only able to circumvent the plans of dangerous enemies but which would, as a last resource, humble Israel before its final triumph as a nation by compelling a recognition of His Messiahship. His conceptions were therefore of a kingdom of this earth instead of a heavenly kingdom. For this sordid belief Jesus reproached him, saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan (tempter); thou art an offence unto Me; for thou savourest not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

To give a more apt illustration of His meaning, and to disabuse the minds of His followers of such illusions as Peter had given creation to, He called His disciples and the people to Him and said to them, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shail lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? . . Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed; for He shall come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father with the holy angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works. And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here who shall not taste of death till they have seen the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

CHAPTER XXII.

IRRADIATED MOUNTAIN OF TRANSFIGURATION.

LEAVING the city of Cæsarea Philippi (the ruins of which appeared to us sadly tremendous as we encamped there last December), Jesus may have made a circuit of a considerable region thereabout, or He may have gone into retirement with His disciples for the double purpose of privately instructing them in their duties, which they must soon take upon themselves without His helpful presence, and also to escape the persecutions of His enemies who continued to menace His life. But where He went or what He did we do not know; there is no record; there is no intimation. For at least six days Jesus was practically withdrawn from the world, so far as the gospel narratives are concerned, for it is written that "Six days after these sayings [His rebuke of Peter and declarations to His disciples and the people] Jesus taketh Peter, James and John, his brother, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves, to pray."

Why did Jesus show this apparent favoritism? What prompted Him to permit only these three to behold the glory which was now about to be visited upon Him, and withhold such ineffable testimony from the other nine? It is enough for us to know that He had good reasons for so doing, and they are not beyond the pale of plausible supposition. In a company of twelve men there are always to be found great differences of temperament, and it is this variety of dispositions that creates friendships and arouses dislikes. All of the apostles were no doubt ardently attached to Jesus, but there were some who must have become closer to Him than others; some who blended their lives with His own more perfectly; some who understood Him better; some who loved Him with a greater fullness of devotion, and some who better comprehended His mission, than others. They had all sat at His feet and listened, with admiration, wonderment and feelings of endearment, to His wisdom and counsel, but some must have come closer to His heart than others, and felt the throb of His bosom and interpreted the voice of His soul. Why, even in the family circle, while parents may love all their children alike, yet there are one or two of a half-dozen that seem to ask more ardently for the parental blessings, whose attachments appear to be stronger, whose conduct gives more cordial demonstration of affectionate endearment. In short, some natures blend, while others will not assimilate; some are drawn

irresistibly together, while between others there is the barrier of diffidence, or uncongeniality, or repulsion, forbidding confidence, companionship. Thus while Jesus certainly felt great warmth of friendship for all His disciples, and this love was returned by them, yet some enjoyed a degree of affection much greater than others. Indeed, Jesus Himself plainly indicated His special love for John and James, those sons of thunder, and for Peter, on more than one occasion. It is quite probable also, that James, John and Peter were better prepared to receive the testimony which was about to be given, for their spiritual insight, while not yet entirely clear, was greater, we must believe, than that of the other disciples who had not yet come to a realization of the spiritual kingdom which Christ was to set up.

Oh, Wondrous Vision!

Having fully revealed Himself to His apostles as the Messiah promised, the time had now come for offering another testimony, in addition to the miracles performed, to the complete substantiation of His claims, in which God himself was to be the witness. Therefore, while Jesus was praying on the mountain peak, somewhere near Cæsarea Philippi, the proof of His divinity suddenly blazed up in a cloud of glory, to dazzle, bewilder and to awe the three disciples. "And as He prayed, He was transfigured before them; the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was as white as the light, glistening and shining exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spoke of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw His glory, and the two men that stood with Him."

Oh, what wondrous, sublime, ecstatic spectacle! Behold this glorious vision! Jesus had heretofore appeared to His disciples and the multitudes as only a servant, a man so merciful that His heart was always bursting with sympathy; so kind that His eyes spoke benedictions upon all who came to claim His help; so generous, that He gave up everything and worked unceasingly that the suffering might be able to share all His bounty. They had seen Him pale and faint from protracted exertion in His mission of immeasurable mercy; His feet blistered from hard travel over dusty highways, and rugged steeps and rocky valleys; they had seen Him reviled, traduced, persecuted by mendacious Pharisees, who sowed His paths with slander, and set crowds against Him by the vilest of all possible misrepresentations. But now behold the everlasting testimony of that great Trinity of which God Himself stood at the head. See how His benign face shines like a blazing sun, and how His worn raiment scintillates with ineffable light radiating from His precious body. Glory on His head,

and at His feet, and holding Him in the sublimation of Messianic splendor, and the super-exaltation of transfiguration.

The Glory of Heaven Revealed.

How long had Jesus been praying?—perhaps through the long watches, until His disciples' eyes grew heavy with the weight of sleep, and until darkness had flung down the curtain of midnight, and the stars seemed to wink with drowsiness. But such flood of heavenly light flashed over the mountain top that midnight became as midday, and awoke to living ecstasy the dreaming disciples, whose eyes opened upon a scene more dazzling with awe-inspiring magnificence than was ever before or since witnessed. Behold Jesus, the glorified one, and the great law-giver bound in spiritual companionship with the great prophet, the three conversing as in loving brotherhood, but in which compassion and sorrow told how all heaven was moved by the sacrifice that was soon to be made.



SCRIBES OF ANCIENT PALESTINE.

Gradually the vision faded, and when Peter recovered from his overwhelming awe at the beatification of his Lord, in the enthusiasm of intense felicity he said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and if Thou wilt, let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." He would on this sacred spot have elaborate and adorned tents pitched, one in honor of Divinity, a second in honor of the Law, and the third in honor of Prophecy. But, "while he thus spake, there came a bright cloud, and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered into the cloud, and there came a voice out of the cloud, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him.'" It was the glorious cloud of God's presence, the Shekinah that symbolized Jehovah's appearance in the Tabernacle, the great light that illuminates all the shores of eternity. Such blinding effulgence that the three disciples fell upon their faces with fear, but in another moment the visitation was ended; the flaming cloud uprose; day broke over the mountain, and as the voice ceased Jesus touched the three, saying, "Arise, be not afraid."

Jesus Points to John as Forerunner.

The gentle touch of Jesus' hand dispelled all fear from His disciples, and with returning trustfulness how they must have felt a worshipful impulse; and what flattery and exaltation they must have experienced at the remembrance of the glorious vision, and how anxious they must have been to tell their experience to their less favored companions; and to proclaim to the people the heavenly manifestation made in their presence in demonstration of the divine Sonship of Jesus. But as they came down from the peak of transfiguration, Christ especially charged them to reveal nothing of what they had just seen until He was risen from the dead.

The vision of deification probably served to render the disciples more diffident in their intercourse with Jesus, for while the three talked freely among themselves as to what could be His meaning of rising from the dead, they had so far lost their familiarity with the Lord that it would appear they were too reserved to ask Him for a full exposition of His allusion. But they held discourse with Him on other subjects equally important to them, and on one subject particularly, which had before been frequently alluded to, namely, that of the forerunner whom the scribes declared should first come to prepare the way of the Messiah. "And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?'" It was the seeking after light on one of the oldest traditions of the Jews since they had become a nation; a tradition which had such strong hold upon the beliefs of the people that even the disciples could not wholly divest themselves of their faith in its truth, for otherwise they would not have propounded such a question. Respecting the sacredness and tenacity of

such a belief, Jesus gave them a full answer, which must have clearly satisfied their longings for a reconcilement of their traditions with the appearance of Christ. Said He, "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed ; likewise also, as it is written of Him, shall the Son of Man suffer many things, and be set at naught of them. Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." In other words, He explained to them : "The tradition of a forerunner of the Christ promised is true ; the Jews have believed that Elias would be that forerunner, hence I say that Elias has come. But John the Baptist was the true forerunner, and he it was who prepared the way, but the Jews rejected him and finally put him to death. The Saviour has indeed come, but the people having rejected John will now reject Me, and, with even greater hostility than they showed for John, have set Me at naught and will very soon crucify Me."

Epilepsy Cured.

As Jesus and His three favored companions came down from the mountain, which was on the day following His transfiguration, He saw a multitude surrounding the nine disciples, creating a tumult by derisive shouts and confusing questions. As Jesus drew near, the crowd recognized Him and leaving the abashed disciples they rushed out to greet Him. Among the gathering were many scribes, for they did not cease following Him about, striving to counteract His influence and to array the people against Him. When the crowd reached Jesus, He asked the scribes what was the cause of the disturbance, but their answer was given by a poor suppliant father, who, kneeling at Christ's feet, entreated Him, saying, "Lord, have mercy, I beseech Thee, and look upon my son ; for he is mine only child, which hath a dumb spirit ; for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed, for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him, and bruising him hardly departeth from him ; and he suddenly crieth out and foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away ; and I brought him to Thy disciples and besought them that they should cure him, and they could not."

What a sad picture was here presented. The only child of a doting father ; from a nursling in which parental hope and expectation of useful, prosperous and honorable station budded had now flowered in bitter disappointment, and by inexpressible misfortune had become a living wound, an object of perpetual grief, a concern of inextinguishable anxiety, and a sorrow that cannot be measured even by death of the first-born. And in this depth of affliction the son and father lived on through years of torment until the hope that had withered, and the ambition that was blasted, and the day-dreams that had faded, budded forth

again in sudden and glorious surprise at the appearance of Jesus. How must the father have felt when he first heard, in profound astonishment, of the wondrous cures that Christ and His disciples were performing? Did his aching heart thrill with expectation, and did he now look forward to the restoration of his terribly afflicted boy through Divine instrumentality? Yes; buried hope must have been quickly resurrected, for hearing that the disciples were in his vicinity, he carried his demoniac child to them, seeking their aid for that relief which others had time and again tried to afford, but in vain. Now he brings the demented and wasted and epileptic boy and tells them how great are his sufferings, and how terrible are his ravings, and how pity-compelling are the exhibitions of Satanic influence which mark nearly every hour of his life. The nine apostles are moved by the story of the father and the sad appearance of the boy, about whom they now assemble to work the miracle of his cure; but speak as they may, pray as they may, manipulate him as they may, the evil spirit will not leave him. It requires stronger faith than theirs to overpower Satan; it needs a holier physician than can be found among the nine to grapple successfully with such a tenacious disease and possession. One after another they try to relieve the boy, but in vain; then they renew their efforts altogether, but it is of no use, the evil spirit will not come out of the victim.

The people laugh at this discomfiture of the disciples and deride their pretensions, while the father buries his face in his hands, cast down with hopelessness again into even greater depression than before. But the shouts of scoffers are suddenly hushed, as Jesus is seen approaching, and the voice of derision is changed to a cry of exultation and welcome. As one body, the people run out to meet Jesus with acclaims, followed by the father, in whom hope springs forth anew. And now we behold him in an attitude of worshipful humiliation at the feet of our Lord, begging of Him that aid which His nine apostles had been unable to afford. Learning of the failure, Jesus offered a rebuke to the disciples of small faith, saying: "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" And to the father, "Bring thy son hither to me."

The suffering child was forthwith brought, but as he came into the immediate presence of the Divine Physician, he was attacked with a violent paroxysm which threw him down, and there he lay in terrible convulsions, groaning, frothing and in contortions that must have excited all that crowd with great sympathy. Jesus asked the father how long the boy had suffered from this frightful affliction, and received for reply, "Since childhood, and ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the water to destroy him; but if Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Christ was now to give not only an evidence of His divine power, but to impart a lesson by way of illustrating the faith necessary to

salvation as well as that which is required of those seeking divine aid. Therefore said He, "If thou canst believe ; all things are possible to him that believeth." At this the father took hope, but yet he had been so often disappointed, and the cure of such a sorely and long afflicted one seemed to him so nearly impossible, that in despairing voice and with eyes filled with tears, he exclaimed, "Lord, I believe help Thou mine unbelief."

This half-hearted faith was yet a manifestation of a desire for greater strength to believe, which Jesus rewarded by casting out the evil spirit that possessed the boy, but before finally departing the sufferer fell into another fit which so convulsed him that at its expiration he lay as one dead, with rigid features, pallid countenance, glazed eyes, so that all who looked on him believed that the boy was indeed dead, and so declared. But the miracle was concluded by Jesus taking the subject by the hand and lifting him up fully restored and delivering him sound in mind, pure in body, healthy in every organ, to his overjoyed father, "and they were all amazed at the mighty power of God."

The Astonished Disciples.

The confusion which the nine disciples felt before the crowd over their failure to restore the boy was not nearly so great as that which they now experienced before their Lord, and they sought the earliest opportunity for privately asking Jesus why they had been unable to cast out the evil spirit. He answered them by rebuking them for their unbelief, and by declaring that had they proper faith no difficulty would be so great that they could not overcome it, but without this firmly convincing belief and this strong sustaining faith they could do nothing above other men.

After remaining for some time in the district about Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus took His departure from that territory and went over again into Galilee, followed by His twelve apostles, proceeding probably by way of Dan and across the Lebanon mountains, thus avoiding the more frequented highways. His active ministry was now approaching its close, and His time was henceforth largely devoted to instructing His apostles in their duties, and in preparing them for the tragic end of His life, now near at hand.

As they journeyed, or possibly while in some retreat among the mountains, where retirement from the people was not likely to be interrupted, Jesus foretold to His disciples again how He would soon be betrayed, and executed, and that three days after His death He would be resurrected. The disciples however could not understand His prophecy, seemingly choosing to regard His words as conveying some secret meaning, like that veiled in His parables, but they were afraid to ask Him for an explanation. They did not cease to believe that He would sooner or later exercise His divine power for the establishing of the material

kingdom which all Jewry had so long looked forward to, and though He gave them many assurances that His was a spiritual and not a material kingdom, yet they preferred to consider His words as dark sayings rather than abandon their old traditions and beliefs.

Christ Pays Tax.

After wandering for a while in Northern Galilee, Jesus proceeded to Capernaum, still in company of His disciples, where He avoided strangers because there was such hostility against Him that His public appearance there now would certainly have been quickly followed by His arrest. He no doubt lodged with Peter, or with the sons of Zebedee—John and James, who were probably better able to care for Him. But His disciples did not withdraw themselves, for shortly after their arrival at Capernaum one of the tribute collectors came to Peter and asked him if His Master had yet paid His tax. This tribute was a levy first made by Moses upon the people to provide funds for the building of a Tabernacle, which was collected yearly, at the time of the "numbering of the people." The collection continued up to the time of the captivity of the Jews, and was re-imposed after the return from bondage, but the payment was not enforced by provisions of legal penalties, being rather in the nature of a free offering towards the maintenance of the Temple service. The amount, too, was small, being about $1.75 of our money for every Israelite above twenty years of age, in whatever country he might be living, the priesthood alone being exempted. But small as was this tax offering, in the aggregate it amounted to a vast sum which, constantly accumulating, filled the Temple treasury and was the object that led to repeated violations of the sanctuary and finally to the destruction of both the Temple and Jerusalem by Titus, and the sequestration of the treasure by his father, the Emperor Vespasian, who transferred it to the Capitoline Jupiter.

It is probable that when Jesus arrived in Capernaum, the period for making the annual collection was passed and that He was in arrears, for otherwise we cannot understand the spirit of the inquiry which the collector addressed to Peter. Anxious to perform a service and to discharge an obligation for his Master, Peter acknowledged the unpaid tax and went immediately away to his house to get the money. But on the very threshold he was arrested by Jesus who, learning of the cause of his return, began questioning His devoted disciple on the propriety of paying the annual levy, a question which had long been in dispute between the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus, in this instance, agreed with the latter in condemning the collection as an injustice, but rather than offend against a long-observed custom having a Mosaic precedent, He told Peter to go to the sea and cast in a hook and to open the mouth of the first fish taken, in which he would find the money with which to pay the tribute of both Peter and Himself. "That take," said Jesus, "and give unto them for Me and thee."

The object of this miracle is more important than the singularity of its performance, in which many profess their inability to perceive any special reason or lesson. When the Lord met Peter at the door He asked, "Of whom do the kings of the earth receive custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?" and Peter answered, "Of strangers." "Then," said Jesus, "are the children free." Jesus took this means of impressing Peter, who had confessed Him as the Son of God, with His Divinity, which placed Him on equality with the King of kings, and who thus being the true Temple was exempt from levies for its maintenance. And He implies the exemption of Peter also, and inferentially of all His disciples, though He did not thus reveal Himself to the others.

Ambitious Disciples.

This favoritism, which Jesus had shown to three of His apostles on several occasions, and again exhibited in the payment of the tribute money for Peter, caused jealousies, and discussions, and perhaps hard feelings, until at length their disputes prompted some of the disciples to ask, after much persuasion by Jesus, who saw that they were in contention among themselves, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The question was considered such a grave one, involving as it did the conception of the disciples respecting heaven, in opposition to the establishment of the spiritual kingdom which Jesus had several times declared, that He called all the apostles about Him and answered the inquiry by imparting instructions as to what constituted the kingdom of heaven, and who might enter therein. "If," said He, "any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." The disciples evidently had in mind the setting up of an earthly kingdom, the restoration of Judah, and a refounding of the Jewish government upon a new theocracy of which Christ was to be the head. Having been witnesses of His omnipotent power, they regarded His declarations as containing a hidden meaning which they construed as implying the early establishment of His kingdom on earth, and they entertained an ambition, if not a firm belief, that they would be appointed to high offices or hold some place of distinguished preferment in the new government. This aspiration, as well as false conception, was now destroyed by more explicit statements and clearer revelation than He had ever made before. Jesus called a little child and taking it up in His loving arms, He said to His apostles, "Except ye be converted [from your ambitions] and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me. For he that is least among you all, the same shall be great." As Dr. Eddy says, our Lord's language may be paraphrased thus: "You are disputing among yourselves who shall be greatest in My kingdom, when it is doubtful

whether you are qualified to enter it. Behold this child, so obedient to My call, so confiding, so unambitious, so loving; this is a model disciple. If you would be great in My kingdom, renounce first all your pride and jealousy and lust for pre-eminence, and become as this little child. Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

The lesson thus imparted by Jesus made such an impression upon the disciples that they asked other questions, in a spirit of desire for further instructions respecting their duties and faithful performance of all obligations, and the righteous observance of such requirements as would qualify them for admission into the spiritual kingdom. Jesus gratified their longings by an exposition of the doctrinal basis upon which His church was to be founded, on the evil of offenders against justice and forbearance, and the necessity of every man keeping well the faith and in seeking to bring others into communion with God and fellowship with the Son, illustrating His lesson of compassion and forbearance by powerful allegory.

Forgive Four Hundred and Ninety Times.

"Then came Peter to Him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" Yes, answered Jesus, seven times, and seventy times seven; indeed, there should be no limit, no depth, no height, no boundary to forgiveness. And to impress more firmly upon His disciples the grace, beauty and praiseworthiness of pardon, and the deformity, vice and iniquity of pitiless avengement or rigorous exaction, He gave them a parable of an unjust creditor. "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take an account of his servants." The king (or lord) had many debtors, for being rich he was a large lender to the poorer people; but however rich a man may be he must look after his loans, his mortgages, his accounts, or else the largest fortune will soon be distributed beyond reclamation. So there are days for paying as well as for lending, and this lord now sent out notices to his debtors for them to come and settle their indebtedness to him. In the olden times and even in this country less than one hundred years ago, there were such laws in force as enabled creditors to oppress their debtors to the limit of human endurance, and even to take charge of and mutilate the body after death. At the demand of a Shylock, Antonio might be thrust into jail, or, with his wife and children, be sold into slavery to satisfy the debt. And it was so in Palestine in the time of Christ.

And the lord, having sent out notices to those who owed him sums of money, and found that one of his chief delinquents, whose indebtedness was ten thousand talents, had allowed the obligation to remain unpaid after maturity, ordered the man to be brought before him. The poor fellow no doubt presented a pitiable sight, for he knew how harsh and mercilessly exacting were nearly all

the rich men, so rigorous in their dealings that the lenders were called lords, and the borrowers were known as servants. And trembling from head to foot the delinquent made his appearance. "Why have you not paid your debt to me?" angrily demands the lord. "Because," answers the fear-stricken defaulter, "I have no money." "Then away with him to prison, and put up his wife and children at auction, and let them be sold for slaves to the highest bidder, and bring to me the price of their bondage." "Hold, hold one moment," cries the poor unfortunate, falling upon his knees before the hard lender, "spare my wife, the loved one of my bosom, and my dear little children, who are guiltless of wrong; send them not into servitude for my improvidence; save them from the misery, the degradation and the blight that slavery would impose. I pray you, sir, have mercy and patience and I will pay you all."



THE UNJUST DEBTOR.

The lord could not withstand this plea; that voice of supplication went to his heart with such force that it opened the well of compassion, and so deeply moved was he by the wail of distress, that he ordered the debtor to be released

and even discharged him from further liability. This was an act of mercy which set the rich lord upon a pre-eminence of nobility and goodly example, and is an illustration of the pardoning grace of God, who freely forgives every debtor who comes with an earnest supplication for pardon for offences.

But how did the forgiven debtor profit by the mercy that had been shown him? Immediately after receiving a discharge at the hands of his compassionate lord, he went out and sought for a man who owed him the pittance of one hundred pence. Finding the small borrower over the way, this heartless man, transformed from humble debtor to enraged creditor, rushed across to him, took the delinquent by the throat, and demanded that the debt be paid at once. The surprised, alarmed and trembling servant fell at the feet of his inexorable master and pleaded with him for mercy and a little patience, promising to pay the debt if but a short time was allowed him in which to raise the money. But, to his shame, with an exhibition of avarice and cruelty that was disgraceful to humanity, the creditor ordered the unfortunate man cast into prison, there to remain until the debt was discharged. But such savage rapacity was not to go unwhipped of justice. The lord who forgave the debtor, learning how he had abused a more unfortunate defaulter, sent for him, and when he came cowering and abject, like a base ingrate about to receive his well-merited punishment, the lord said to him: "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldst thou not also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?" And in wrath at this unrequitement of the mercy that had been shown him, the generous lord handed him over to the officers to be kept in prison, or set at labor as a slave, until the large debt of ten thousand talents was discharged. The application of the parable is found in the words with which Jesus concluded it: "So likewise shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother's trespasses."



CHAPTER XXIII.

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

HOW long Jesus remained in Capernaum, on His visit there after returning from Cæsarea Philippi, it is difficult to determine; but circumstances indicate that He entered the place only a short while before the Feast of Tabernacles, which was held at Jerusalem in the latter part of September and the early part of October. He had now remained away from Jerusalem for a period of nearly eighteen months, during which time He had been persecuted wherever He went and practically outlawed by the bitterly jealous Pharisees. He had been hunted, driven, reviled, and threatened, until His life was menaced, and to have appeared in Jerusalem at any time during this unhappy period would be to invite His arrest and probable execution. Nevertheless, His relatives from Nazareth, and His friends throughout Galilee, urged Him to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, (or of harvest) having always in mind His divine power, which they hoped to have Him exercise for the establishment of His rights to the dignity of King of the Jews. The old traditions had represented that the new king, who was to bring back and emphasize the glory of Judah, would be declared at Jerusalem, and regarding Him as the truly anointed one they urged Him now to show Himself there and assume the rulership and confound His enemies. But Jesus answered them always that His time had not yet come, that His was a mission of peace, and that His was a spiritual and not an earthly kingdom. With these excuses Jesus remained a while at Capernaum, after the great caravans of pilgrims had gone by toward the Holy City, by which delay He avoided a commingling with crowds on the way that would have created fresh disputes and made His entrance into Jerusalem a cause for public demonstration that might have ended abruptly in His arrest. The feast continued for eight days, culminating on the last in a magnificence of celebration far exceeding that of the preceding days, and Jesus therefore deferred His departure from Capernaum for two or three days after the great body of pilgrims had passed, being content to attend only the latter part of the festival.

On the Way to Jerusalem.

Jesus at length set out for Jerusalem attended by His twelve apostles and several disciples, proceeding southward by the way of the plains of Esdraelon and then into Samaria, probably selecting the route over which He journeyed to

Galilee after the close of His ministry in Judea. While on the way He sent messengers in advance to secure lodgings for the night for His large party. At one place application for entertainment was refused by Samaritans, whose ire had been aroused upon learning that Jesus, whom they had been told was the Messiah, was going to Jerusalem to participate in the feast of Ingathering, and was therefore passing by Gerizim, where they looked for the Messiah to set up His kingdom. This inhospitality so offended John and James that they asked Jesus if they might not call down fire from heaven to consume the jealous Samaritans, as Elijah had destroyed his enemies, but Christ rebuked their intemperate and fiery passion, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

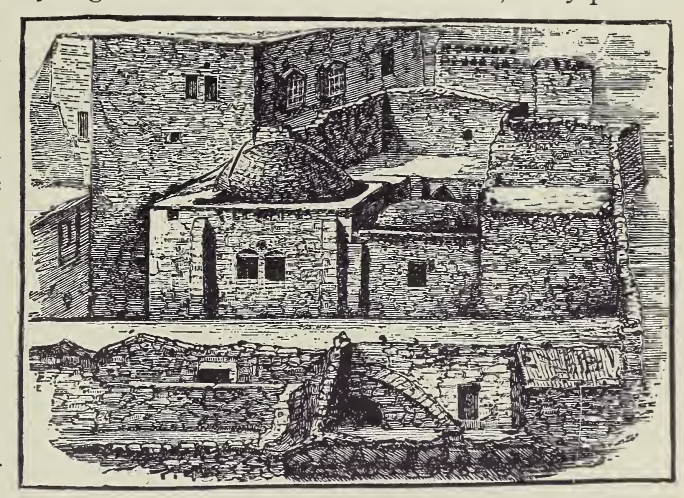
As they journeyed forward Jesus instructed His disciples again in their duties towards all men and the necessity of that faith which was likened to child-like dependence and confidence in a parent. And many who came to Him asking admission to apostleship He dismissed as being without the necessary qualifications for such a mission, which involved a renunciation of the greater comforts and lustful pleasures of this life. But though He accepted few on the journey, there was so large a following of worthy disciples that He ordained seventy—corresponding to the Jewish idea of the number of nations on earth—to go forth in pairs and preach the gospel, laying upon them the same injunctions that He gave to the apostles when sending them out on a like mission.

Ten Lepers Drop Their Scales.

While still on the way through Samaria, but perhaps when near the boundary of Judea, as they came within sight of a village, a sad spectacle arrested the progress of Jesus, and called forth another exhibition of His divine power for the relief of the distressingly afflicted. Accustomed to human suffering as He was, Jesus must have been specially moved by the appearance of ten lepers whom He saw sitting a little way back from the highway that led into the village. The Samaritans suffered no lepers to enter any of their towns, condemning these poor unfortunates to isolation, and thus limiting their subsistence to what charity offered, or what friends might place at convenient distance for lepers to receive only after the donors had withdrawn, near approach to people not thus afflicted being prohibited.

The horrors of this slow-consuming and most repulsive disease were such that hope of cure was abandoned and the sufferers, having no privilege to associate with others, naturally sought the society of their kind, so that bitter as was the hatreds between Jews and Samaritans, all enmity was dispelled by this desperate peace-maker, and the lepers of the two hostile peoples freely mingled with one another.

As Jesus plodded along the highway, followed by His disciples, the ten lepers descried Him, and whether by intuition or report which had reached them of His early coming that way, they raised their cracked voices with cries of "Unclean, unclean! Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." To such an appeal for help, coupled as it was by faith, Jesus never turned a deaf ear, and to these He therefore said, "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." Off they started at once in the happiness of hopeful assurance, but they had gone but a few steps when lo! crippled feet, distorted hands, rheumy eyes, furred tongue, distracted body, and all the pathological phases of the living death suddenly became changed, until the living death became rejuvenated life, and the features of leprosy assumed the appearance of perfect health, and every organ resumed its natural function, every peccant humor was eliminated, every sore and ulcer and canker not only healed, but not a scar left to remind them that they had ever been victims to the most dreadful disease that mortal was ever afflicted with.



UPPER STORIES AND HOUSETOPS OF JERUSALEM, OFTEN USED AS LODGING-PLACES WHEN THE CITY WAS CROWDED WITH STRANGERS.

But though the lepers felt the quickened power of their limbs, they used them to continue on speedily to receive a cleansing at the hands of their priests, rather than return first to express their gratitude to Jesus. Nine of them, who were Jews, ran rapidly to the village, not even so much as casting a grateful look, nor voicing a single word of thanks. They perhaps all started off together, the Jews setting out for Jerusalem to procure a certificate of cleansing, and the Samaritan probably starting for Gerizim, or to the nearest Samaritan priest, for a like certificate of release from the quarantine under which he had been held for so long a time. But the latter had not proceeded far when he felt the thoroughness of his cure and, placing gratitude before religious ceremonial, he returned, and casting himself upon his face before Jesus he poured out his thanks in fullest measure and raised his voice in glorification of God. Jesus said to him, in appearance of surprise, "Why, were there not ten lepers? Where are the other nine? Is there only one who feels any gratitude for recovery?' Is

there no Jew among the number who has any sense of gratefulness for his release from the greatest of afflictions? Is it possible that only one, and he a Samaritan, an enemy of the Jews, whom they call a heathen, comes back to render his acknowledgments?" But so it was, and Jesus said unto him, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

Jesus Appears on the Temple Porch.

On the first day of the feast at Jerusalem, inquiries about Jesus began to be made and so increased that He soon became the subject of general conversation among the attendants. "Has Jesus put in an appearance yet? Is He coming? Surely He would not remain away, being a Jew, and especially claiming to be the Messiah." "What do you think of Him?" "Why," says one, "evidently He is a holy man, for His teachings and examples are all praiseworthy." "No," says another, "He is a blasphemer, an enemy of the rabbis, a desecrator of the Sabbath day. Why, did He not heal a man at Bethesda's pool on the Sabbath, and did He not heal a blind man on the Sabbath, and did He not pluck ears of corn, or suffer his disciples to do so, on the Sabbath?" And thus the disputes and discussions went on among the bazaars and temple booths for three days or more, when to the astonishment of everybody Jesus suddenly, without any announcement of His coming, appeared on the Temple porch in the place reserved for the rabbis, and as one having authority to preach from that station, He began to discourse to the people who speedily flocked around to hear Him. Among the audience were hundreds, yes, thousands, of His old enemies, whom the rabbis led in hostility and who had plotted secretly to compass His death. They were dumfounded however at His bold denunciation and His fearlessness, which seemed a defiance of them in their stronghold, and aroused them to such a pitch of fury that they procured an order for His arrest. But their threats in no wise disturbed Him; with calmness and the irresistible power of His illustrations, reasoning and captivating eloquence, He gave testimony to His Messiahship, though with a spirit of humility that offered no sign of self-aggrandizement, and at the same time He gave a severe rebuke to the hypocrisy of his critics who were such sophists, and withal so inconsistent, that they command circumcision on the Sabbath, while violently condemning the healing of the sick as a desecration of the day.

To these declarations the Pharisees and rabbis entered vigorous protests, but their anger was increased to the greatest intensity by the announcement which Christ made, not only reflecting upon their sincerity, but boldly charging them with a false conception of God, whom indeed they did not know. Said He, "Ye know Me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. But I know Him, for I am from Him."

Here was a direct declaration that Christ was an emissary from God, and that the religious teachers of the Jews were not only unfitted for the profession of spiritual instructors, by reason of their attachment to tradition and to binding ceremonials, and the unmerciful quality of their beliefs, but that they did not even know God. But to this charge He added that of capriciousness, for, while upholding the Mosaic laws with an affectation of great consistency and sincerity, Jesus told them that they only sustained the law when it served their purpose, and violated it when their interest seemed to advise. Said He in effect: "You say I am ignorant of the law; but it were better to be ignorant of the law and not disobey it, than knowing what it enjoins and deliberately violate it. The law requires you to love your neighbor, but you set the Sabbath above any who need assistance; the law says 'Thou shalt not kill,' and yet you have in your hearts a murderous feeling against Me, though I have not offended against the law, for good works only have I done."

His bold utterances struck home, and while it increased the anger of the rabbis, many who heard His words believed on Him and said, "When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" But the Pharisees were furious, and the chief priests sent officers to arrest Him, but Jesus knowing their plot against His life said, "Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. Ye shall seek Me and shall not find Me, and where I am thither ye cannot come. My time is almost come when I shall be offered as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. After the death which you can inflict I shall ascend again to My Father. Some day you will discover the iniquity of your acts; some day you will come to bathe the feet of My cross with tears of regret; some day you will look aloft and cry, 'Lord, Lord;' but I shall not recognize you; and where I sit, in the Kingdom eternal, beside the Father who was from the beginning, there ye cannot come." But the Pharisees could not understand Him, nor did their conception ever arise above low material conditions that fitted their earthly ambitions and temporal conveniences.

"Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, 'Of a truth this is the prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?' So there was a division among the people because of Him, and some of them would have taken Him; but no man laid hands on Him."

When the Pharisees and chief priests found that Jesus had not been arrested, in pursuance of their orders, they sent for the officers and asked them why they had not performed their duty. But the officers only answered, "Never man spake like this Man." This was a short reply for subordinates to make to their superiors, but it was pregnant with great meaning. It might be interpreted, "We

acknowledge you as our rulers, we confess our duties, we try to serve you and obey the law. If you tell us to arrest a criminal we will take him at the risk of our lives, for we regard no danger when in the execution of your orders. But, with all deference to your position, we crave your pardon for acknowledging a power that is far above you. We believe that Jesus, while having committed no offence, is that power to which all the world owes acknowledgment as the Christ; to arrest Him would therefore be to insult God, to arraign earth against heaven, and our consciences cannot approve such an attempt."

Jesus had so aroused the feelings of the people that whereas He was spoken of in kindly terms only in secret during the first days of the festival, He was now championed by such a large number that the chief priests would not hazard the forcing of His arrest. The members of the Sanhedrim, however, exerted all their influence against Him, except Nicodemus, who, finding himself alone in a belief of Christ's divinity, if indeed he entertained so high an opinion, was barely bold enough to rise before that body and ask, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?"

But they cried him down by a fierce and captious question, asking in derision, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

The Woman Taken in Crime.

Although every Jew attending the great festival was expected to find lodgment in some booth, or inn, or hospitable residence, Jesus was so beset by enemies that when night came He retired to the Mount of Olives. Whether He found entertainment there in the house of some friend, or sought the seclusion of cave or orchard, or the camp of His followers, we are not told; but in the early morning, John says, He returned to the Temple and resumed His discourse to the people. While He was thus teaching, the audience was disturbed by an incident which has ever since served to afford the strongest possible evidence of God's immeasurable mercy and the illimitable extent of His forgiveness.

A group of men are pulling and pushing along a woman who had committed the worst crime against society. When they have brought her in front of Christ, they ask that He sentence her to death by stoning. They are a critical, merciless, disingenuous crowd. They want to get Christ into controversy and public reprehension. If He say "Let her die," they will charge Him with cruelty. If He let her go, they will charge Him with being in complicity with wickedness. Whichever way He does they would howl at Him.

Rebuked in Fitting Words.

Then occurs a scene which has not been sufficiently regarded. He leaves the lounge or bench on which He was sitting and goes down on one knee, or both



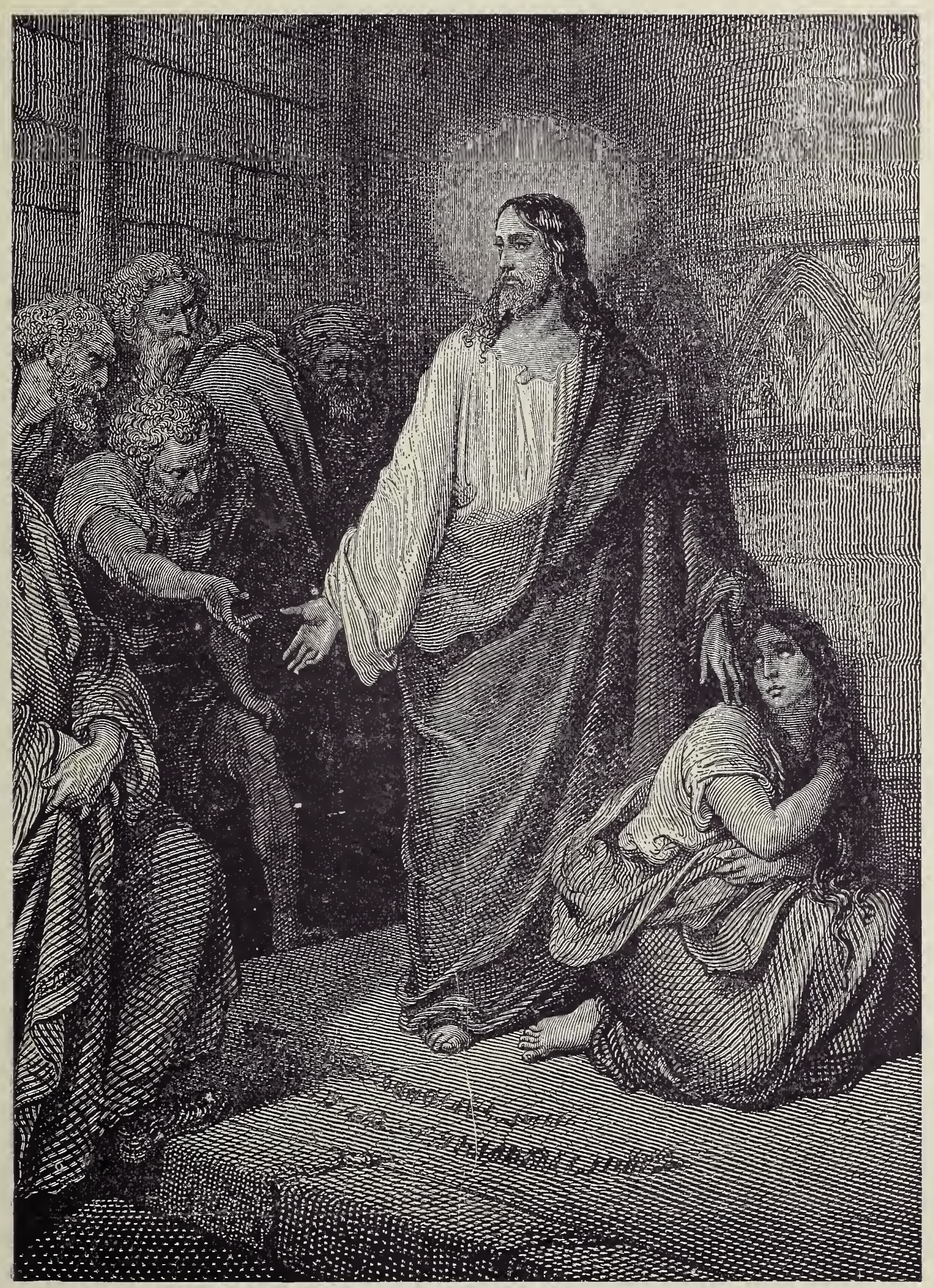
"TOUCH ME NOT"—(JESUS AND MARY MAGDALENE).—Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

knees, and with the forefinger of His right hand He begins to write in the dust of the floor, word after word. But they were not to be diverted or hindered. They kept on demanding that He settle this case of transgression, until He looked up and told them that they might themselves begin the woman's assassination, if the complainant who had never done anything wrong himself would open the fire. "Go ahead, but be sure the man who flings the first missile is immaculate." Then He resumed writing with His finger in the dust of the floor, word after word. Instead of looking over His shoulder to see what He had written, the scoundrels skulked away. Finally, the whole place is clear of pursuers, antagonists and plaintiffs, and when Christ had finished this strange chirography in the dust, He looks up and finds the woman all alone. The prisoner is the only one of the court room left, the judges, the police, the prosecuting attorneys having cleared out. Christ is victor, and He says to the woman: "Where are the prosecutors in this case? Are they all gone? Then I discharge you; go and sin no more."

But what did Christ write on the ground? The Bible does not state. Yet, as Christ never wrote anything except that once, you cannot blame us for wanting to know what He really did write. But I am certain He wrote nothing trivial or nothing unimportant. And will you allow me to say that I think I know what He wrote on the ground? I judge from the circumstances. He might have written other things, but kneeling there in the Temple, surrounded by a pack of hypocrites, who were a self-appointed constabulary, and having in his presence a persecuted woman who evidently was very penitent for her sins, I am sure He wrote two words, both of them graphic and tremendous and reverberating. And one word was "Hypocrisy," and the other word was "Forgiveness." From the way these Pharisees and scribes vacated the premises and got out into fresh air, as Christ, with just one ironical sentence, unmasked them, I know they were first-class hypocrites. It was then as it is now. The more faults and inconsistencies people have of their own, the more severe and censorious are they about the faults of others. Here they are: twenty stout men arresting and arraigning one weak woman. Magnificent business to be engaged in. They wanted the fun of seeing her faint away under a heavy judicial sentence from Christ, and then after she had been taken outside the city and fastened at the foot of a precipice, the scribes and Pharisees wanted the satisfaction of each coming forth and dropping a big stone on her head, for that was the style of capital punishment that they asked for. All of those libertines, dramatizing indignation against impurity. Blind bats lecturing on optics. A flock of crows on their way up from a carcass, denouncing carrion.

A Clean Sweep of Pardon.

Yes, I think that one word written on the ground that day by the finger of Christ was the awful word "Hypocrisy." But I am sure there was another word



JESUS PROTECTS THE ERRING WOMAN.—Drawn by Doré.

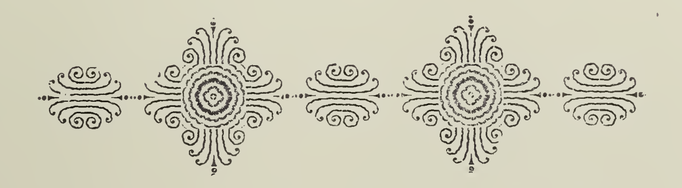
in that dust. From her entire manner I am sure that arraigned woman was repentant. She made no apology, and Christ in no wise belittled her sin. But her supplicatory behavior and her tears moved Him, and when He stooped down to write on the ground, He wrote that mighty, that imperial word, "Forgiveness." When on Sinai God wrote the law, He wrote it with finger of lightning on tables of stone, each word cut as by a chisel into the hard granitic surface. But when He writes the offence of this woman He writes it in dust, so that it can be easily rubbed out when she repents of it. Oh, He was a merciful Christ! I was reading of a legend that is told in the far East about Him. He was walking through the streets of a city and He saw a crowd around a dead dog. And one man said: "What a loathsome object is that dog!" "Yes," said another, "his ears are mauled and bleeding." "Yes," said another, "even his hide would not be of any use to the tanner." "Yes," said another, "the odor of his carcass is dreadful." Then Christ, standing there, said: "But pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth." Then the people, moved by the idea that any one could find anything pleasant concerning a dead dog, said: "Why, this must be Jesus of Nazareth." Reproved and convicted they went away. Surely this legend of Christ is good enough to be true. Kindness in all His words and ways and habits. "Forgiveness." Word of eleven letters, and some of them thrones, and some of them palm branches. Better have Christ write close to our names that one word, though He write it in dust, than to have our name cut into monumental granite with the letters that the storms of a thousand years cannot obliterate. Bishop Babington had a book of only three leaves. The first leaf was black, the second leaf red, the third leaf white. The black leaf suggested sin; the red leaf atonement; the white leaf purification. That is the whole story. God will abundantly pardon.

Give Woman a Chance.

I must not forget to say that as Christ, stooping down, with His finger wrote on the ground, it is evident that His sympathies are with this penitent woman, that He has no sympathy with her hypocritical pursuers. Just opposite to that is the world's habit. Why did not these unclean Pharisees bring one of their own number to Christ for excoriation and capital punishment? No, no; they overlook that in a man which they damnate in a woman. And so the world has had for offending women scourges and abjurgation, and for just one offence she becomes an outcast, while for men whose lives have been sodomic for twenty years the world swings open its doors of brilliant welcome, and they may sit in Legislatures and Senates and Parliaments or on thrones. Unlike the blessed Christ the world writes a man's misdemeanor in dust, but chisels a woman's offence with great capitals upon ineffaceable marble. For foreign lords and princes, whose names cannot even be mentioned in respectable circles abroad because they are walking

lazarettos of abomination, our American princesses of fortune wait, and at the first beck sail out with them into the blackness of darkness forever. And in what are called higher circles of society there is now not only the imitation of foreign manners, but an imitation of foreign dissoluteness. I like an Englishman and I like an American, but the sickest creature on earth is an American playing the Englishman. Society needs to be reconstructed on this subject. Treat them alike, masculine crime and feminine crime. If you cut the one in granite, cut them both in granite. If you write the one in dust, write the other in dust. No, no, says the world; let woman go down and let man go up. What is that I hear splashing into the East river at midnight, and then there is a gurgle as of strangulation and all is still? Never mind, it is only a woman too discouraged to live. Let the mills of the cruel world grind right on.

And now I can believe that which I read, how that a mother kept burning a candle in the window every night for ten years, and one night very late a poor waif of the street entered. The aged woman said to her, "Sit down by the fire," and the stranger said, "Why do you keep that light in the window?" The aged woman said: "That is to light my wayward daughter when she returns. Since she went away ten years ago my hair has turned white. Folks blame me for worrying about her, but you see I am her mother, and sometimes, half a dozen times a night, I open the door and look out into the darkness and cry: 'Lizzie! Lizzie!' But I must not tell you any more about my trouble, for I guess, from the way you cry, you have trouble enough of your own. Why, how cold and sick you seem! Oh, my! can it be? Yes, you are Lizzie, my own lost child. Thank God that you are home again!" And what a time of rejoicing there was in that house that night! And Christ stooped down and in the ashes of that hearth, now lighted up not more by the great blazing logs than by the joy of a re-united household, wrote the same liberating words that he had written more than eighteen hundred years ago in the dust of the Jerusalem temple—"Forgiveness!"—a word broad enough and high enough to let pass through it all the armies of heaven, a million abreast, on white horses, nostril to nostril, flank to flank.



CHAPTER XXIV.

A DISPUTE OVER PRE-NATAL SINS.

CONTROVERSY with the Jews and with the Sanhedrim continued as long as Jesus remained in Jerusalem, and would have resulted in His imprisonment if the orders issued by chief officers had been obeyed. But there was a division of sentiment among the people, many influential persons even believing that Jesus was a prophet, while yet others were more radical and made public confession of their belief in Him as the Messiah. Nevertheless, the rabble were incited against Him by the priesthood, and an effort was made to stone Him, but His time was not yet come, and at an extreme moment of peril He disappeared from among them. Whether this disappearance was by withdrawal suddenly and commingling with the crowd, or by rendering Himself invisible, we are not told, but whatever may have been the means which He employed, His escape from the mad ravenings and threatenings of His enemies was effected without inviting pursuit.

"Then took they up stones to cast at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the Temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

From the reading of John, it appears that Jesus and His disciples passed out of the gates of Jerusalem together, for it is related that "as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

By the gates of the cities of Palestine beggars were accustomed to sit and solicit alms from those who went out and in, and even to this day the custom continues, though not as general as it was in the time of Christ, for lepers are not nearly so numerous now as they were then. Yet in nearly every city I entered while traveling through the Holy Land, I was met at the entrances, whether at the gates of walled cities or the entering roadways, by the beseechments of many beggars suffering from every manner of affliction. This blind man whom Jesus thus met, while a beggar, was probably a person of distinguished characteristics, for the manner in which John represents him when brought before the Sanhedrim leads to the belief that he was a man of acute perception and of many natural parts which lifted him far above the masses in intellectual attainments.

The old Mosaic law recognized the transmission of disease, which was regarded as the product of sin, through three and four generations, and certain

diseases were considered as types of particular sins. Whence came this belief? It was not an institution of hierarchal assumption to inspire fear or to increase the power of priestcraft, for the belief was older than Moses. In Persia there was a faith implanted by Pythagoras, who borrowed it from the yet more ancient East, which recognized the indestructibility of the soul, or the undying spirit of all living things, and which they believed transmigrated into another body when their former tenancy was ended by death. Upon this belief there were grafted others, one of which was that souls had not only an eternal existence and their birth was coincident with that of the body, but that in their ante-natal condition they had a personality which made them amenable to laws, the violations of which were sins, and from which there was no absolvement. Therefore, when a soul entered a body it retained all its deformities, moral or intellectual, and these were manifest in afflictions of the flesh. For this reason it was said of the blind man, as of any one born with any deformity: "Thou wast altogether born in sins." The Pharisees were undoubtedly subjects of this singular belief, as is proved by the dispute growing out of the creation of vision in the sightless man.

The Windows of Sight Opened.

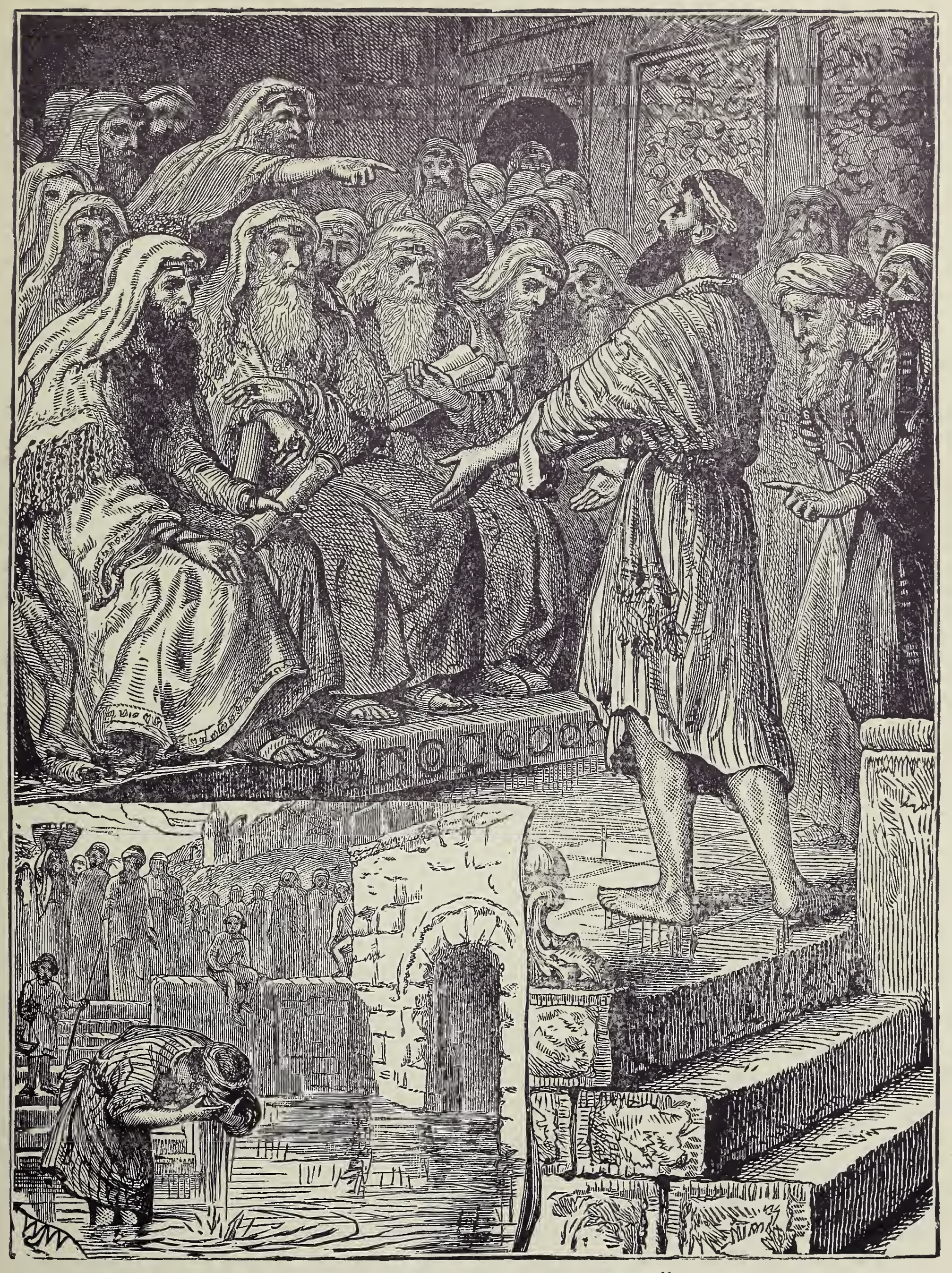
It was this belief in congenital sin among the Pharisees that prompted the disciples to ask of Jesus so singular a question, doubtless with the hope that He would reveal to them the measures of its correctness. Without wholly disappointing them, Jesus chose to briefly reply, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be manifest in him." This was an explicit denial ot the old beliefs, if the blind man be regarded as an ordinary example, but the implication seems to be that God had fore-ordained him to be a subject for the operation of the divine power in its manifestation before the people. Apparently to prevent their further questioning concerning a belief which the disciples were hardly prepared to receive an explanation or interpretation of, Jesus taught them the importance of merciful acts without hesitating to first inquire as to the worthiness of any one to receive mercy. This He did by reminding them that His mission on earth was a short one, which was devoted to works rather than to discussions, or even revelations, respecting beliefs in which salvation had no proper place. Therefore, said He, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world." Or in other words· "I cannot waste my time in combating such transmitted beliefs, nor must you seek to explore such idle questions at the expense of your merciful duties. It is sufficient to know that where affliction exists, your duty is to relieve it; that where sin abounds, strive to save the sinners; that where the sorrowful are found, use your gifts to console them."

When Jesus had thus quietly rebuked His disciples, He spat upon the ground and made a poultice of the moistened clay, which He applied to the eyes of the blind man and then told him to bathe in the pool of Siloam. And the hopeful man ran gleefully away, perhaps led by some friend, until he came to the pool and there, following the directions given him, he bathed his sightless eyes, when lo, the lids opened, and the world of darkness moved away like a cloud floating from the face of a long-obscured sun, and light gathered in the cornea and struck through the pupil and set the iris revolving in an envelope of aqueous humor, and luminous rays poured in upon the lens and were reflected again in glorious vision. It was a plunge out of the world of Cimmerian obscuration into a land of resplendent illumination; a birth of sight, a creation of vision, a revealment of image. "And he went his way and washed, and came seeing."

The Sanhedrim in Disputation with the Beggar.

Jesus might have created sight in the blind eyes of the subject of His divine power by speaking a single word, but He had an object in employing means calculated to first excite belief in the unfortunate. Clay was supposed to possess curative properties, as is still believed by many, while the waters of Siloam were noted for their healing virtues. Thus, while neither clay nor water were really agencies in the creation of sight, yet the employment of these means served to excite the blind man's faith in Jesus as a true physician, and so the way was opened for belief.

The appearance of one born in blindness and grown to manhood in this affliction, and who suddenly received sight, must have been remarkable to those who had known him from his youth. No wonder that his friends hardly recognized him; no wonder that his changed expression and the miraculous gift that had been bestowed so confused them that they asked one another: "Is not this he that sat and begged?" Some there were, who knew him best, that declared positively he was the man born blind; others, doubting the possibility of such a miracle, could not bring themselves to an implicit belief, though they frankly admitted he was like the man; but their doubts were relieved by a joyous admission from the subject. Discussion thus ended among the man's acquaintances, but when he told them how one named Jesus had given him sight, the people were so astounded that they insisted on bringing him before the Pharisees, who might perchance give some explanation of the miracle. There was great excitement we must believe, and as the wisest men were looked to for an interpretation of all singular events, the Sanhedrim, whose members were Pharisees, had the man brought before them and by these pundits he was critically questioned. And they asked who is this person that gave you sight, and where may He be found? But the fortunate one could not answer them, for he did not himself know.

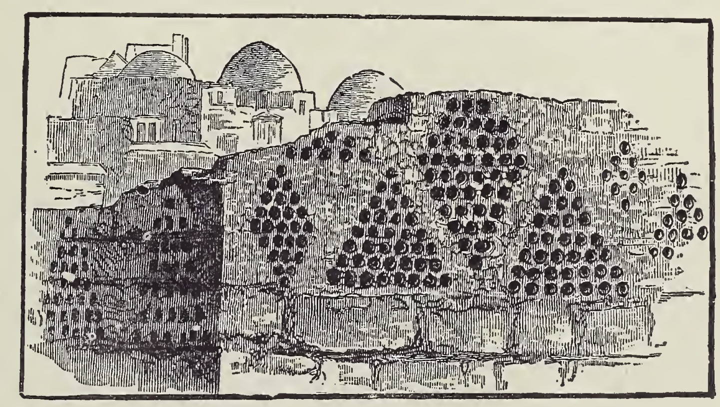


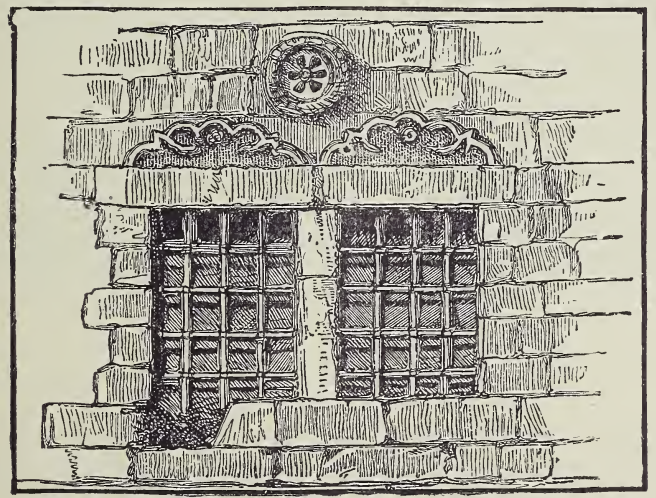
"WHEREAS I WAS BLIND, NOW I SEE."

Pursuing their inquiries, however, the Sanhedrim soon learned that the gift of sight had been bestowed on the Sabbath day, and this fact gave them the opportunity sought to veil their ignorance behind a pompous show of learning and a bombastic exhibition of their regard for the Sabbatic laws. "Why," said some of them, "this Man is not righteous, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But there were a few among the seventy who composed that body honest enough to ask their colleagues, "How can a man who is a sinner do such things?" Thus even their pompousness did not quite stifle inquiry; for the honest members confounded the majority; so they began again to question the man, who had for a while stood mute before them, listening to their wise saws and instances. Therefore they asked him: "What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes?" The question was a direct one, and the captious members of the ecclesiastical body were startled by the no less direct reply: "He is a prophet."

Not satisfied with their examination of the subject of the Lord's power and mercy, the Pharisees sent for the man's parents, and these being brought before the court of inquiry they were questioned in many things appertaining to their son. Their answers were made with caution, because they knew the bigotry of the Jews and had probably heard of their bitter rancor against Jesus. They accordingly only acknowledged that he was born blind and that he had suddenly received sight, but by what means they knew not; said they, "He is of age, ask him." Nothing satisfactory to the Sanhedrim could be gained from the parents, so the son was again called in, and to him they fawningly and seductively spoke: "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." Or, to paraphrase: "You have suddenly received your sight, it is true, but was it through the power of Beelzebub or of God? Give God the praise for so great and miraculous a gift; do not impute power like this to a man, and least of all to a man who violates the Sabbath. Come now, lift up your praises to God alone." But the man was no less grateful to his benefactor than he was logical in his reasoning, therefore he answered them: "Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." Still the court did not give over their efforts to influence the man to acknowledge his benefactor as a sinner and to have him make a confession which they might use against Jesus. Thus they facetiously asked, "What did He to thee; how opened He thine eyes?" With evidence of impatience at the persistency of their questionings, each one of which showed animus and insincerity, the man responded: "I have told you already, and ye did not hear; wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be His disciples?" He was justified in meeting their captious and impertinent inquest with ironical rejoinder, and being put to confusion by his answers these grave theologians showed great vexation, and the spokesman of the ecclesiastical tribunal, perhaps the high.priest himself, with a manifestation of self-sufficiency

and superiority said to the man, "Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples; we know that God spake unto Moses; but as for this fellow, we know not from whence He is." True enough, they did not know Jesus, the Christ, and their ambition for place and power prevented them from knowing God. Quick to see the force of their admission, the man made most excellent use of it by showing wherein they condemned themselves, saying: "Why, herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing."





PERFORATED PARAPETS AND LATTICED WINDOWS IN THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

What a hard rap was his at the ignorance, the hypocrisy and the arrogance of the Sanhedrim. It was equivalent to saying: "You sit in judgment on things concerning which you know nothing: you hoodwink the people by assuming a knowledge of every thing, both secular and ecclesiastical, but you are wise only in your own conceits, and render your judgments according to the influences that affect your own interests. You have no consideration for mercy when it conflicts with your advantages, and you sit there now, deaf to the voice of justice, and condemn Jesus because He does more gracious works and is more worthy of God's favor than you."

No wonder the hierarchal judges were galled and that they flew into a rage. They could not answer his arguments, and being convicted under the man's accusings and the proofs which he so ably proclaimed, in a spirit of wrathful indignation they cry, "Put him out, put him out." "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou (presume to) teach us?" And they cast him out, excommunicated him, and would no doubt have remanded him to perpetual blindness had they possessed the power.

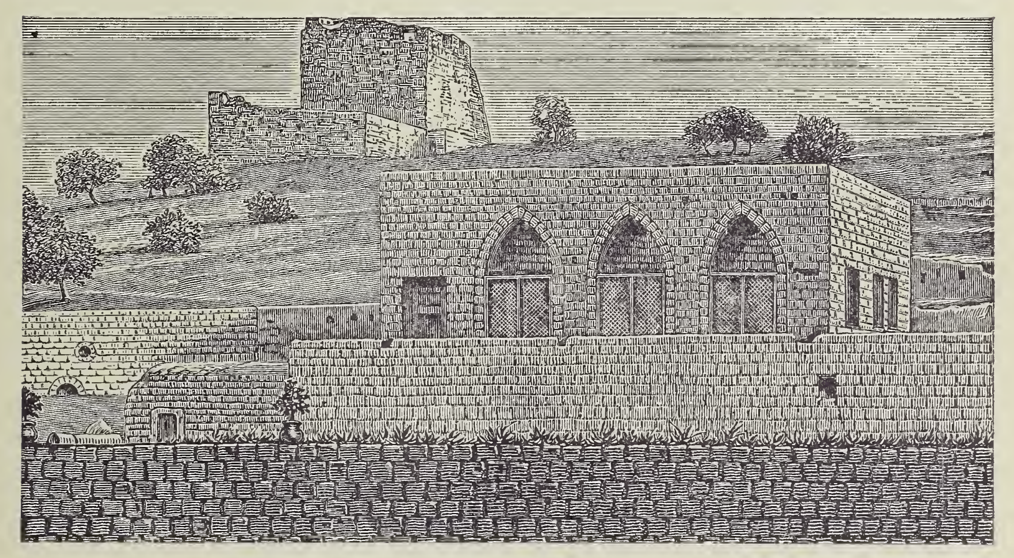
Jesus heard how the man had been treated by the Pharisees, and soon after finding him, asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Up to this time it is evident that he who had miraculously received sight did not know his benefactor, though it is probable, and so appears from his answers before the Sanhedrim, that he had a belief that he had received the gift from either Christ, of whom he had certainly often heard, or from some newly-risen prophet. But he asked in reply to the inquiry of Jesus, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? and Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." At this revelation the man must have rejoiced, for his heart was full of gratitude, so full indeed that he would brave the wrath of all Jewry in making confession of his debt and his acknowledgment of the heavenly-derived powers of Jesus; so, without hesitation, and with fullness of faith, he said, "Lord I believe, and he worshiped Him." And Jesus said, "For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind."

Parable of the Good Shepherd.

The meeting and dialogue between Jesus and the blind man drew a crowd of interested listeners, among whom were several Pharisees who were so stirred up by the sayings of Christ that they asked Him, "Are we blind also?" "Ah," answered Jesus, "it were infinitely better for your souls if you were blind, for seeing the works of God, and not believing on Him, and being instructed by the Son of God and rejecting Him, is the blindness of obduracy and extreme sinfulness, a condition worse than a loss of all the five senses, because you will not accept a cure."

Jesus seized the occasion to discourse further to His audience, who were probably half-inclined to receive His instructions, and to make His meaning and claims to Messiahship more easily comprehended by His hearers He related a parable of the Good Shepherd. This illustration was particularly appropriate and forceful among a people who were largely engaged in sheep tending, constituting indeed a chief industry of the nation, and which was so far a typical pursuit that the shepherds were chosen as the first to receive tidings of the Messianic birth, while Jesus gave to Himself the title of the "Good Shepherd," and the shepherd's crook is still retained as the sceptre of catholic authority.

Said Jesus, "I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Or to relate the parable in its direct application: "I am come into the world to gather within the fold of everlasting life all men, of whatsoever nationality, but no man can be of my flock who seeks entrance by means such as the Pharisees practice, for men shall not be accepted who make a pretence of righteousness when in fact they are worldly-minded and refrain from merciful acts. These are they whom I may liken to thieves and robbers who climb over and mingle with the flock. The truly deserving can only enter into the fold through the door provided, and I am that door. They that are within will not hearken to the voice



ANCIENT CASTLE ON THE SPUR OF MOUNT CARMEL.

of a stranger, but My call they recognize, since they know that I am the true shepherd. I give my life for my sheep, but he that is a hireling, who assumes to be a shepherd only to compass his own evil ends, flees at the coming of a wolf—the glittering promises of worldly preferment and pleasure—and having no real care for the sheep leaveth them to be destroyed or scattered."

"I am the good shepherd and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have [all the nations of the world] which are not of this [Jewish] fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from

Me, because I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."

The application of the parable was so direct and convicting that some of the Pharisees took offence and in their rabidness exclaimed, "He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him?" But there were other Jews present who, more just and less prejudiced, believed the words of Christ, and therefore answered: "These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

Ministry of Jesus in Perea.

Departing from Jerusalem, Jesus returned again to Galilee; but His stay in that province was a short one, for the Pharisees had set the people against Him so virulently that His labors could not again be renewed there with promise of reward. There was a short interval between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication, and though it was not required by the law that every Jew should be present in Jerusalem at the latter celebration, and though He had been threatened with arrest and with stoning on His last visit to the Holy City, yet Jesus nevertheless "steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem."

After pronouncing woes upon Capernaum and Chorazin, and upon the cities that rejected Him, Jesus set out upon His journey, but instead of proceeding directly toward Jerusalem, He passed southward to the borders of Samaria and thence eastward across the Jordan to the southern district of Decapolis, and thence into Perea. Wherever He went large crowds followed, beseeching Him to heal their sick and to confer blessings, to all of which calls upon His mercy He promptly responded But, singular to relate, not only were the scenes of pressing multitudes and miracles of healing which distinguished His ministry in Galilee repeated in Perea, but He found here enemies who confronted Him, as they did in Galilee, with claims that He performed miracles by a power delegated to Him by Beelzebub. So striking do the coincidences appear that some learned commentators declare that Luke, who alone records the incidents of this journey, has inserted a repetition of the discourses and miracles performed by Jesus in Galilee, a belief that is accepted by many of the Bible writers. For this reason it is impossible to tell how long Jesus remained in Perea or what He did there; but as some months intervened between the Feast of Dedication, celebrated in December, and the Crucifixion, an interval in which the life of Jesus was always in jeopardy, it is probable that if He did not spend a greater part of His time in Perea, He must have been in some retired district of Judea for a considerable while. So indefinite are the records that it cannot with positiveness be stated that Jesus returned to Galilee directly after the Feast of Tabernacles, and not a few authorities hold to the belief that He remained somewhere in the vicinity of Jerusalem, perhaps at Bethany, until after the Feast of Dedication. It would be a satisfaction to know every thing that transpired in

our Lord's life, and also the order in which the events occurred, but as these have not been revealed, we must accept with thankfulness that which is recorded, nor spend our time in vain discussions which can give us neither satisfaction nor consolation. We may derive comfort from the fact that, considering the times in which Jesus lived, the few who could read and the fewer still who could write, and the labor, with crude means at hand, of compiling records, and the persecution of Christ and His disciples, it is a miracle that so many of His works and sayings have been preserved to us.

A Hypocritical Interrogation.

It is related by Luke that on this presumably last journey of our Lord many expedients were employed by the Pharisees to entrap Jesus, not only by arraigning Him before the people as a desecrater of the Sabbath, and as a person in collusion with Satan, but also by attempts to expose Him as one ignorant of the Mosaic law, and thus to hold Him up before the people as an impostor. This last subtle effort was not without promise of success, for the law and its interpretations were a



THE PRIEST AND LEVITE PASSED BY.

mass of contradictaries which it required the Messiah indeed to reconcile. This Jesus showed on many occasions by healing the sick on the Sabbath, by excusing His disciples for plucking grain on that day, by receiving the anointings of Mary Magdalene at Simon's house, by forgiving the woman taken in sin, etc. And yet on each occasion He gave such excellent reasons for his conduct that, in the estimation of the unprejudiced, He found justification against both law and immemorial custom. But though often vanquished, the enemies of Jesus did not cease their efforts to confound Him by plying questions in which their own law

was in conflict with experience and practice, and which to answer in any wise would therefore appear necessarily to involve either an inconsistency or direct violation. Thus a certain rabbi, a lawyer as he was called, because of his thorough knowledge of the Mosaic law, of which he was an interpreter, beholding Jesus as He was probably discoursing to an audience, propounded to Him this question: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" and Jesus answered, "What is written in the law? How do you interpret it?" To this the rabbi replied by quoting the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." This law the rabbi recited with a glibness that showed how often he had repeated it before the classes under his instruction; so trippingly that it proved how parrot-like were his morning and evening utterances, and how truly small was his sincerity of belief in the law which he made a part of his daily invocation, and which he wore as an ornament on his phylacteries. But his false conception of the true spirit which the law was intended to embody was further exhibited by the inquiry which followed. Said Jesus, "Obey this law and thou shalt live." "But," asked the rabbi, "who is my neighbor?" If Christ had answered, "Thy neighbor is he who lives near you, or who is thy intimate, or who is thy townsman, or who is thy confederate in any cause, or any one be he Jew or Gentile," the lawyer would have ridiculed Him and said to the people about Him: "Did I not tell you that this man, who declares Himself one sent by God to proclaim a new gospel, is an impostor? Why, He knows nothing about the law, for does not the Mosaic statute say, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,' and does it not deal with offences, and condemn evil, and punish with stripes, and with stoning, and with execution, and cast out the Gentile as unworthy to be numbered with the congregation? and in violation of these sacred laws this man does not condemn the wicked, He does not favor the punishment of evil doers, He forgives sinners, He regards not the Sabbath, He pardons the guilty, and He fellowships with publicans and Gentiles."

Parable of the Good Samaritan.

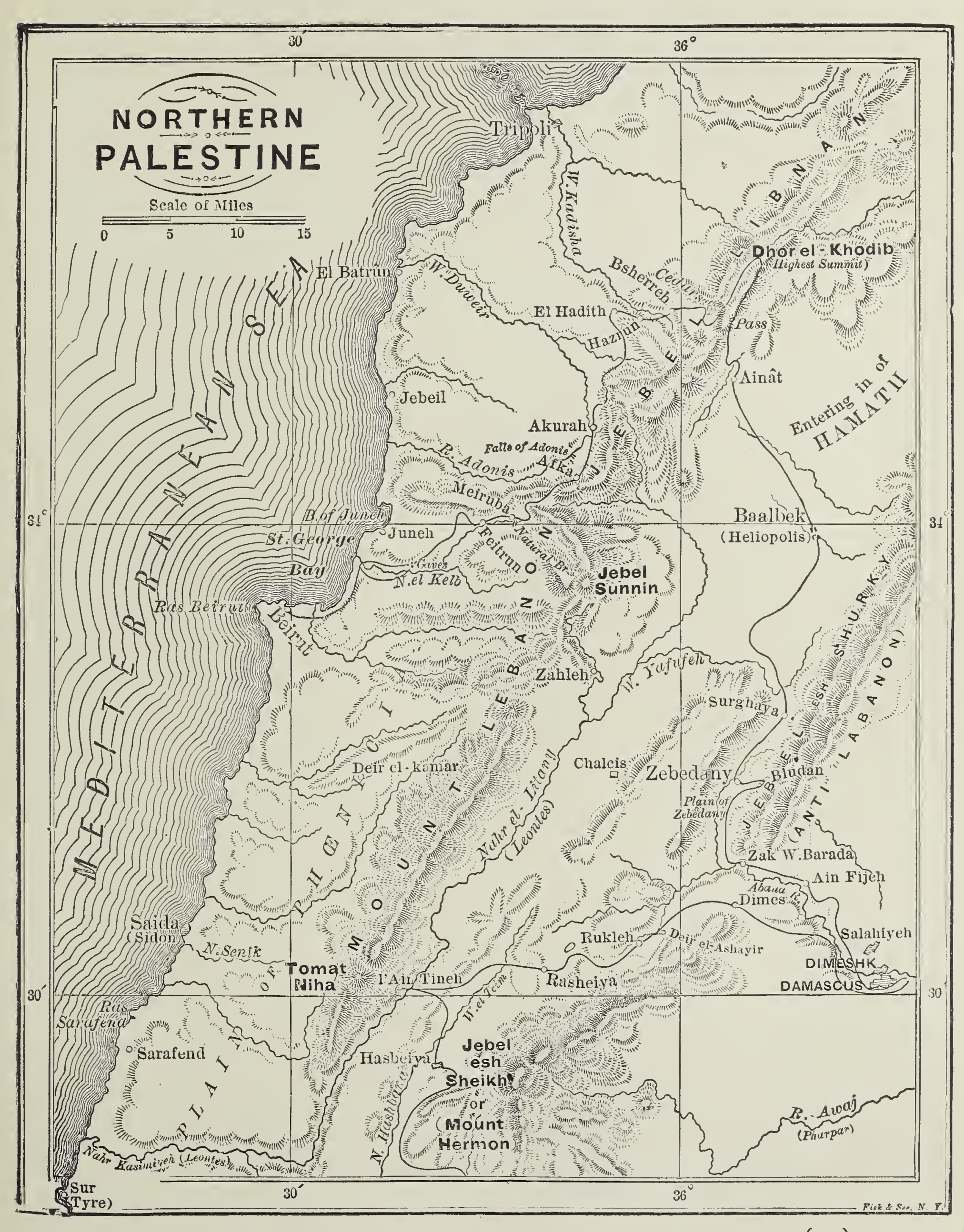
Christ knew what was in the heart of this hypocritical rabbi, He saw the purpose of the inquiry, He thoroughly understood the craft of this lawyer, hence He answered the question by delivering a parable, which was a form of instruction common among rabbinical teachers themselves. Said He: A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The way, as you know, is rugged and robber-infested, so that it is considered one of the most dangerous in all Palestine. Caves abound in which thieves may take refuge when beset by officers of the law, and there are lofty crags overhanging the road in many places, from which a small murderous band might hurl down rocks upon an enemy below, so that it is a



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.—From the Painting by a A. Morot, Medal of Honor, Paris Salon, 1880.

perilous undertaking for even a well-armed body to attempt a dislodgment and arrest of outlaws who infest such a retreat. But this man had to pass through this dangerous region, hoping, however, that his poverty would preserve him against attack, as he carried nothing to excite the cupidity of thieves. But his hopes were cruelly disappointing, for he had not gone far on the way when a band of robbers rushed out and with stones or bludgeons knocked him down and after stripping him of his clothes left him, half-dead from terrible wounds, to the cold mercies of any passer-by. Presently, after the robbers had departed, a priest came that way and saw the poor man lying in a pool of blood, moaning and perhaps feebly calling for help. But the priest only gathered up his own robes to prevent soilure in the bloody dust of the road, and making a half circuit about the victim, went on, heedless of the appeals made for assistance. Directly a Levite, who was of the priestly class, came also by the place, and seeing the wounded man, had barely enough curiosity to stop and look at him. But the groans of the sufferer failed to arouse any compassion, and so he too went on, without so much as inquiring how badly he was hurt, or giving him a drink of water, or offering a word of encouragement by the way of a promise to send him aid. And in the roadway the poor man was left unattended, until a Samaritan, journeying over the way, came up and discovered his sorry condition. In a moment the Samaritan's heart was struck with compassion ; he saw that the wounded man was a Jew, and hence his enemy, but in the presence of suffering he forgot nationality, he ignored the enmities that divided the two peoples, he felt only his humanity knocking at his heart and saying, "Give the wounded stranger assistance ;" and taking a bottle of wine from his hamper, with it he washed the wounds and then poured a healing oil over the bruises and the bleeding cuts, and tearing a bandage from one of his garments he bound up the injuries, after which he lifted the poor man upon his own beast and conveyed him to the nearest inn. But his compassion did not expend itself with this noble deed of mercy, for being unable to remain and care for the sufferer himself beyond a day, before he departed he took money from his purse and gave it to the inn-keeper, saying : "Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee."

"Which now of these three," asked Jesus of the rabbi, "thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" and the rabbi answered, "He that showed mercy on him." Then said Jesus unto him, "Go thou and do likewise."


NORTHERN
PALESTINE
Scale of Miles
0 5 10 15
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Tripoli
W. Kadisha
El Batrun
W. Duweir
Bsherreh
Cedars
Dhor el-Khodib
(Highest Summit)
El Hadith
Hazrun
Pass
Ainât
Entering in of
HAMATH
Jebeil
Akurah
Falls of Adonis
R. Adonis
Afka
Meiruba
JEBEL LIBNAN
B. of Juneh
Juneh
St. George
Bay
Caves
N. el Kelb
Feitrun
Natural Br.
Jebel
Sunnin
Baalbek
(Heliopolis)
Ras Beirut
Beirut
LEBANON
Zahleh
W. Yafufeh
Surghaya
JEBEL ESH SHURKY
(ANTI-LABANON)
PHOENICIA
MOUNT LEBANON
Deir el-kamar
Chalcis
Zebedany
Bludan
Plain of
Zebedany
Nahr el. Litany
(Leontes)
Zak W. Barada
Ain Fijeh
Abana
Dimes
Saida
(Sidon)
N. Senik
Tomat
Niha
I'Ain Tineh
Rukleh
Deir el-Ashayir
Salahiyeh
DIMESHK
DAMASCUS
Rasheiya
W. el Teim
Ras
Sarafend
Sarafend
PLAIN OF
Hasbeiya
N. Hasbany
Jebel
esh
Sheikh
or
Mount
Hermon
R. Awaj
(Pharpar)
Nahr Kasimiyeh (Leontes)
Sur
(Tyre)
30′
36°
34°
Fisk & See, N. Y.

CHAPTER XXV.

IN THE HOUSE OF MARY AND MARTHA.

OVER yonder is a beautiful village homestead. The man of the house is dead, and his widow is taking charge of the premises. This is the widow Martha of Bethany. Yes, I will show you also the pet of the household. This is Mary, the youngest sister, with a book under her arm, and her face having no appearance of anxiety or perturbation. Company has come. Christ stands outside the door, and, of course, there is a good deal of excitement inside the house. The disarranged furniture is hastily put aside, and the hair is brushed back, and the dresses are adjusted as well as, in so short a time, Mary and Martha can attend to these matters.

The Welcome to Christ.

They did not keep Christ standing at the door until they were newly appareled, or until they had elaborately arranged their tresses, then coming out with their affected surprise as though they had not heard the two or three previous knockings, saying: "Why, is that you?" No. They were ladies, and were always presentable, although they may not have always had on their best, for none of us always have on our best; if we did, our best would not be worth having on. They throw open the door, and greet Christ. They say: "Good morning, Master; come in, and be seated."

Christ did not come alone; He had a group of friends with him, and such an influx of city visitors would throw any country home into perturbation. I suppose also the walk from the city had been a good appetizer. The kitchen department that day was a very important department, and I suppose that Martha had no sooner greeted the guests than she fled to that room. Mary had no anxiety about household affairs. She had full confidence that Martha could get up the best dinner in Bethany. She seems to say: "Now, let us have a division of labor. Martha, you cook, and I'll sit down and be good."

So you have often seen a great difference between two sisters. There is Martha, hard-working, pains-taking, a good manager, ever inventive of some new pastry, or discovering something in the art of cooking and housekeeping. There is Mary, also, fond of conversation, literary, so engaged in deep questions of ethics she has no time to attend to the questions of household welfare. It is noon. Mary is in the parlor with Christ. Martha is in the kitchen. It would have been better if they had divided the work, and then they could have divided



BUSTLING MARTHA AND WAITING MARY.

the opportunity of listening to Jesus; but Mary monopolizes Christ, while Martha swelters at the fire.

Trouble in the Kitchen.

It was a very important thing that they should have a good dinner that day. Christ was hungry, and He did not often have a luxurious entertainment. Alas! me, if the duty had devolved upon Mary, what a repast that would have been! But something went wrong in the kitchen. Perhaps the fire would not burn, or the bread would not bake, or Martha scalded her hand, or something was burned black that ought only to have been made brown; and Martha lost her patience, and forgetting the proprieties of the occasion, with besweated brow, and perhaps with pitcher in one hand and tongs in the other, she rushes out of the kitchen into the presence of Christ, saying: "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?"

Christ scolded not a word. If it were scolding, I should rather have His scolding than anybody else's blessing. There was nothing acerb. He knew Martha had almost worked herself to death to get Him something to eat, and so He throws a world of tenderness into His intonation as He seems to say: "My dear woman, do not worry; let the dinner go; sit down on this ottoman beside Mary, your younger sister. Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful." As Martha throws open that kitchen door, I look in and see a great many household perplexities and anxieties.

Lazarus was probably the mainstay of his sisters, though the family may have been wealthy, as the character of their house certainly indicates, if the ruins pointed out to travelers as those of the residence of the three be genuine. Martha, being the elder, took upon herself the responsibilities of the house, and being an industrious, pushing, ambitious woman, was occasionally out of patience with Mary, who was probably of a more social disposition than her sister, and sometimes forgot her domestic duties in her attentions to friends and acquaintances. But Jesus did not regard this as a fault, since we owe obligations to society which in a degree under circumstances are as imperative as household requirements, for it is to this social characteristic that we stand indebted for our pre-eminence above the lowest classes of human life.

But Christ had been a frequent visitor to the house of Mary and Martha, and it is probable that He made it His home during His visits to Jerusalem. He had revealed Himself to them as the Christ, and hence we can have no surprise that Mary was so ardently attached to Him, and that she forgot all else when sitting at His feet receiving His instructions. Therefore when Martha came with her complaint to Jesus, He said to her: "Thou art troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be

taken away from her. She is more anxious about her soul than about her corporeal needs, and her joy is therefore in learning the means of salvation which I have come to declare. This is that better part which shall never be taken away, but shall bloom perpetually in her heart until it shall bear fruitage in that kingdom from which I am come.''

Return of the Seventy.

While Jesus was in the vicinity of Jerusalem, teaching small parties that gathered about Him, the seventy disciples whom He had sent forth to preach, when on His way to the Feast of Tabernacles, returned and made report to Him of their extraordinary success, and declaring that they had even power over devils in the name of their Master. This happy announcement certainly gave great pleasure to Jesus, even though He must have foreseen the results of their labors, for though as Christ He knew every man's heart and could grasp the two eternities of the past and future, yet within Him was also a temporal nature that connected Him with the earth by common attributes of a mortal, and to which He was largely subject. Therefore must He have been gratified by the report of His emissaries, which foreshadowed the success of the kingdom of the Gospel He had come to set up. But with a comprehension of the ills which might follow unbridled zeal and which frequently among men makes over-self-confidence a precursor of failure, Jesus saw the necessity of repressing the extreme enthusiasm of His exulting disciples, and He therefore said to them, in effect: ''Your report is indeed very encouraging, but it was given to Me to foresee how Satan would fall from heaven like a bolt of lightning, and how he would be unable to withstand the power delegated to you through Me. I have subjected him to you as he has been subjected to Me, and I will give to you also power to tread on serpents and on scorpions, and over all evil things, none of which shall hurt you; but nevertheless rejoice not so much at the power thus bestowed as at the blessings which follow your works, and the knowledge that your names are written in heaven.'' And with this Jesus lifted His eyes towards heaven with thanksgiving, saying, ''I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.'' And turning to His disciples again, He said, ''Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.''

Efficacy of Prayer.

One of the disciples, deeply impressed by Christ's words, asked Him for a form of prayer which should serve for constant invocation, such as John, or the rabbis, prescribed for their followers. This disciple had probably been accepted

some time after the Sermon on the Mount was delivered, and though he may have heard the prayer which was then given by our Lord repeated by others, yet he desired to receive a form from Christ's own lips. His request was answered by Jesus, who repeated substantially the prayer with which all Christians are so familiar, and which glows as a jewel in His incomparable Sermon on the Mount. Having thus satisfied the disciple's longing, Jesus took occasion to speak of the efficacy of prayer when the utterance is accompanied by great faith and persistency, using the illustration of how a friend may be prevailed upon by persistent entreaty to do a thing when simple request would fail to influence him. Then said He, "If perseverance in your importunities move a selfish man to grant your petitions, how much more willing is God to listen to your supplications, since persistence in prayer affords proof of sincerity and faithful devotion to God and dependence in His mercy."

Jesus Shows Himself in the Temple.

For two or three months Jesus had sojourned among His friends in the vicinity of Jerusalem, doubtless living in partial seclusion, and teaching among the few who were willing to receive His instructions even if they were indisposed to accept Him as the Messiah. His wisdom, mercifulness and exemplary life were attractions which the honest Jews could hardly resist, and the few who were not afflicted with the canker of prejudice and bigotry, listened to Him with eagerness, though His conversions during this period were few.

The Feast of Dedication was now at hand, when there was a rejoicing of seven days in commemoration of the renewal of the Temple worship after its suspension under the edict of Antiochus. December's cold had made out-door preaching uncomfortable, and as Jesus always observed the national celebrations, He entered Jerusalem at the time of the feast to participate in the jubilation. His appearance on Solomon's porch, which was that portion of the first Temple which Nebuchadnezzar had neglected to destroy, was quickly followed by a scramble on the part of those who had been in the court to approach nearer to Him. Almost on the instant he monopolized popular attention, and crowds pressed about Him, the Pharisees seizing the occasion to ply Him with questions. For some reasons they were more conciliatory in their speech, and seemed to invite overtures for a reconcilement of the differences that had broken into revilings and threatenings against Him on several occasions. But it was plain that they could not abandon their position of hostility unless He would renounce His pretensions and become plastic to their ambitions. They therefore said to Him: "We have waited long for a Messiah, who has been promised to restore Israel to her former glory, and as Thou hast often intimated that Thou art that Messiah, we ask Thee now to tell us openly. Do not keep us longer in doubt, but if Thou be Christ tell us

plainly." Jesus was not to be beguiled by their soft platitudes, or their proffers of friendship on conditions, so He answered them: "I told you and ye believed me not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you." Or in other words: "I have not only told you, but I have given proofs of My Messiahship by works, by miracles, which I could only do through power given Me by My Father. But you will not believe Me because you are not My sheep. They who are within the fold acknowledge Me as their shepherd and know My voice; to these I give eternal life. My Father which gave Me power to work wonders and to save souls is greater than all, yet I and My Father are one."

Jesus Vanishes Out of the Hands of His Enemies.

At this declaration of His equality with God, Jesus was loudly reviled, and some of the more bigoted and frantic Jews took up stones to hurl at Him. But calm in His Godly dignity and self-possession, Jesus stood fearless before His brutal enemies and awed them by His majestic demeanor. "Ay," said He, "these are your arguments, for lack of reason you would take up stones; pray, for what deed of mercy would you stone Me?" "It is not for good works that we would stone You," answered the crowd, "but for blasphemy, because Thou makest Thyself the equal of God."

"Do you not know," replied Jesus, "that it is written in the law, 'I said ye are gods?' If therefore ye shall call the old patriarchs and the ancient rulers of Israel gods, how can you say I am a blasphemer, when I have given you the proofs that I am above both ruler and prophet, the Messiah who has been sent into the world with such power as you have with your own eyes seen Me manifest. By these works, if ye were not full of bigotry and worldliness, ye would know that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

This further incensed the Jews against Jesus, for while awaiting an answer to their first question they had listened to a defence of His claims to Messiahship. Their anger now knew no bounds; with threatenings of vengeance and ravenings of intense excitement and consuming anger, the crowd, now grown into a mob, rushed toward Jesus with the intention of dragging Him outside the Temple and there stoning Him to death. But His time had not yet come. As on two other equally perilous occasions, He suddenly disappeared and left His rabid enemies howling in distraction at the miscarriage of their murderous designs.

"Lazarus, Whom Thou Lovest, is Sick."

Having, through a miracle, it would appear, escaped the frenzy of a mob, Jesus withdrew from Jerusalem "and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized." In this region, where the people were called

heathens, He would be comparatively safe, even though here also He had met on previous visits with taunts and reviling. But in Galilee, or Samaria, or Judea, there was no security, for His appearance in either province would have been quickly followed by arrest and probable execution. Hence, He went again into Perea, and to His joy crowds "resorted unto Him" and openly acknowledged His Messianic powers, for said they "John did no miracles; but all things that John spoke of this Man were true. And many believed on Him there."

While Jesus was thus preaching to interested congregations at Bethabara, a messenger came in great haste from Martha and Mary in Bethany with the sad tidings, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick."

My Bible is written all over with lead-pencil marks made last December at Bethany on the ruins of the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus. We dismounted from our horses on the way up from Jordan and the Dead Sea. Bethany was the summer evening retreat of Jesus. After spending the day in the hot city of Jerusalem, He would come out there almost every evening to the house of His three friends. I think the occupants of that house were orphans, for the father and mother are not mentioned. But the son and two daughters certainly inherited property, for it must have been, judging from what I saw of the foundations and the size of the rooms, an opulent home. Lazarus, the brother, was now the head of the household and his sisters depended on him, for he was very popular and everybody liked him, and these girls were splendid girls. Martha, a first-rate housekeeper, and Mary, a spirituelle, somewhat dreamy, but affectionate, and as good a girl as could be found in all Palestine. But one day Lazarus got sick. The sisters are in consternation. Father gone and mother gone, they feel very nervous lest they lose their brother also. Oh, the pain of waiting in such an emergency. And the two sorrow-stricken sisters sit and rock themselves in excessive, almost hysterical grief, crying the while, "Oh, if Jesus were only here, He would save our brother." But there is no response to their message and Lazarus grows worse and worse. The fever, the thirst, the quickening breath, the pinched features, the rolling blood-shot eyes, tell a story quite as sad as any the doctor himself could relate. How the girls hang over his pillow! Not much sleep about that house, no sleep at all. From the characteristics otherwise developed, I judge that Martha prepared the medicines and made tempting dishes of food for the poor appetite of the sufferer, but Mary prayed and sobbed. Worse and worse gets Lazarus, until the doctor announces that he can do no more. The shriek that went up from that household when the last breath had been drawn and the two sisters were being led by sympathizers into the adjoining room, all those of us can imagine who have had our own hearts broken. But why was not Jesus there as He so often had been? Far away in the country districts preaching, healing other sick, how unfortunate that this Omnipotent Doctor had



THE TOMB OF LAZARUS, AT BETHANY, AS IT NOW APPEARS.—From *The Christian Herald.*

not been at that domestic crisis in Bethany. When at last Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been buried four days and dissolution had taken place. In that climate the breathless body disintegrates more rapidly than in ours. If, immediately after decease, that body had been awakened into life, unbelievers might have said he was only in a comatose condition.

But Christ remained for two days after receipt of the message, preaching at Bethabara, before He left off His work of teaching to go to the relief of Lazarus, and before this time had expired His friend was dead and laid away in the sepulchre. But Jesus knew the very moment when Lazarus died, and deferred His return to Bethany in order to make a more glorious manifestation of His power and infinite mercy. When at length He said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea," they were amazed at His apparent recklessness and advised against such a perilous undertaking, saying, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?" But he replied by asking them "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" Meaning thereby that His work could not be arrested until the hour when His earthly mission should be accomplished; that until that time all the power on earth could not close His labors by bringing Him to the sacrifice which it was given Him to know He was to suffer. Then said He, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may wake him out of his sleep." Why waken him, when sleep is an index of restoration; when sleep smoothes the wrinkles of pain; when sleep lifts the burden of suffering and lures back the fugitives of strength and composure? And so the disciples wondered why Jesus would wake his friend, for they did not understand that the sleep of Lazarus was the sound slumber of death. Thereupon Jesus told them plainly. Thomas, apparently regarding his Master's safety more than the mission which prompted Him to return, spoke boldly to the other disciples, "Let us also go that we may die with Him." But there is no occasion for fear, Thomas; the Jews will not yet harm Him, for the day of His labors is not yet spent. And so they all started back to Bethany, but on their near approach to the place, they met Martha, who, with fresh burst of grief told Jesus that Lazarus had already lain in the grave four days, and in despairing voice exclaimed, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died." If this were not sufficient evidence of Lazarus's death, there is plenty of other proof. Mary and Martha and her brother had many friends, and these had not yet ceased to offer their consolements in comforting words and kindly acts of sympathy. But there was also the grave in which the body was lying, and to the sepulchre therefore Jesus was led by the two sorrowing sisters, accompanied by a curious crowd. Many sympathizing friends were there, but of the group there were three especially conspicuous: Jesus, who was the family friend, and the two bereft sisters. We went into the traditional tomb in December, and it is deep down and dark, and with torches we explored

it. We found it all quiet that afternoon of our visit, but the day spoken of in the Bible there was present an excited multitude. I wonder what Jesus will do! He orders the door of the grave removed, and then He begins to descend the steps, Mary and Martha close after Him, and the crowd after them. Deeper down into the shadows and deeper! The hot tears of Jesus roll over His cheeks and plash upon the back of His hands. Were ever so many sorrows compressed into so small a space as in that group passing on down after Christ, all the time bemoaning that He had not come before? Now all the whispering, and all the crying, and all the sounds of shuffling feet are stopped. It is the silence of expectancy. Death had conquered, but now the Vanquisher of Death confronts the scene. Amid the awful hush of the tomb the familiar name which Christ had often upon His lips in the hospitalities of the village-home comes back to His tongue, and with a pathos and an almightiness of which the resurrection of the last day shall be only an echo, He cries, "Lazarus! come forth!" The eyes of the slumberer open and he rises and comes to the foot of the steps and with great difficulty begins to ascend, for the cerements of the tomb are yet on him and his feet are fast and his hands are fast, and the impediments to all his movements are so great that Jesus commands: "Take off these cerements; remove these hinderances; unfasten these grave clothes; loose him and let him go!" Oh, I am so glad that after the Lord raised Lazarus He went on and commanded the loosening of the cords that bound his feet, so that he could walk, and the breaking off of the cerements that bound his hands, so that he could stretch out his arms in salutation, and the tearing off of the bandage from around his jaws, so that he could speak. What would resurrected life have been to Lazarus if he had not been freed from all those cripplements of his body? I am glad that Christ commanded his complete emancipation, saying, "Loose him and let him go."

Jesus is Condemned to Death by the Sanhedrim.

The raising of Lazarus produced a profound sensation, far exceeding that created by the restoration of the widow's son or Jairus' daughter. Many of the witnesses believed on Him, but yet others were so impregnated by the belief fostered by the Pharisees and rabbis ascribing His power to Beelzebub, that they hastened to Jerusalem and gave their report of the miracle with malicious comments and falsification. But the rabbis were frightened at the effect and the Sanhedrim was hastily called together to take counsel and decide what should be done. Said they, "What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." Here was the secret of their malice openly confessed. To save them from loss of power they must brand Christ with their official condemnation. But an effort to do this without formal trial aroused the

opposition of such honest members of the assembly as Nicodemus, and there was a prospect of the council breaking up without positive action, when Caiaphas, the Sadducean high-priest, arose with a proposition that quieted the opposition. Said he, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," or to paraphrase, "Do you not perceive that the whole nation is in peril because of the miracles of this Nazarene? The people are already wild with excitement, and if He be not speedily arrested, in their worshipful enthusiasm they will proclaim Him king and then Rome will set upon and oppress or destroy us. Therefore I say, whether He be innocent or guilty it is infinitely better that we condemn Him to death than that we take the risk of being ourselves ruined." "And from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death."

Jesus Becomes a Fugitive.

Jesus avoided His enemies by repairing to a city called Ephraim, which was on the edge of the wilderness northeast of Jerusalem, but the identical location is not known. Here He abode as a fugitive for a short while, and then again crossed the Jordan into Perea, where the people were less hostile to Him, and where He must have had a great many friends, because He was not only followed by crowds, but was suffered to preach to the people, who came to hear Him in vast assemblages. But though Perea was regarded as a heathen province, its population was about one-half Jewish, over whom the rabbis exerted a controlling influence, as they did in Galilee and Judea. These were as bigoted and hypocritical as those in other parts of Palestine, and held the Sabbatical laws in the same rigid estimation. As Jesus had small regard for the proscriptions, exactions and unreasonable requirements of these oppressive laws, which laid the people under fanatical persecutions, it is not a matter for surprise that since He found all times and all occasions proper for the exercise of His divine functions, He should fall under the condemnation of the Jews of Perea for deeds of mercy on the Sabbath.

Oh, Wondrous Healer!

As Jesus was preaching in one of the Perean synagogues on the Sabbath day, His attention was attracted to a poor woman, with distorted body, as she stood behind a partition of open work which separated the male from the female members of the audience. She had hobbled into this place of worship, carrying with her so great a weight of infirmity that her head was almost at a right angle with her hips. From this position she could not rise, for a rheumatic affection of eighteen years had drawn the muscles with such rigidity that they appeared ossified.

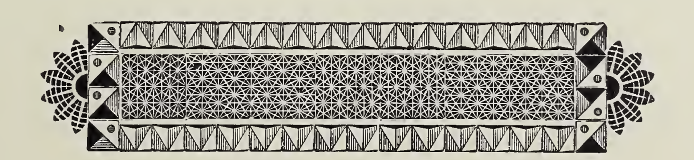
If you could call a convention of all the surgeons of all the centuries their combined skill could not cure that body so drawn out of shape. Perhaps they

might stop it from getting any worse, perhaps they might contrive braces by which she might be made more comfortable, but it was, humanly speaking, incurable. Yet this divine surgeon called out to her, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmities," and then put both His hands on her, and from that doubled-up position she began to rise, and then the empurpled face began to take on a healthier hue, and the muscles began to relax from their rigidity, and the spinal column began to adjust itself, and the cords of the neck began to be more supple, and the eyes that could only see the ground before, now looked up into the face of Christ with gratitude, and up toward the heavens in transport. Straight! After eighteen weary and exhaustive years, straight! the poise, the gracefulness, the beauty of healthy womanhood reinstated.

Such a cure, wrought by word and touch, ought to have excited not only irrepressible thanks of gratitude in the woman, but also reverential admiration in all who were witnesses of the deed, and to have filled that synagogue with worshipful believers; but alas, for the chilling indifference to Godly manifestations which the Pharisees felt; instead of the whole congregation giving voice to praise, the rabbi, who was priest of the synagogue, arose to give utterance to protest. With words betraying his anger he silenced the woman's offerings of thankfulness, and read to her and the audience a lecture on the immorality of doing good, short of saving life, on the Sabbath day. Said he, "There are six days in the week in which it is lawful that men may work, a fact which this Healer either does not remember or ignores. If you must seek His aid, see that you do it on one of the secular days, and do not tempt Him, or give Him any excuse for violating the holy Sabbath."

It was not often that Jesus became angry; His nature was all humility as it was all merciful, but He could not repress His indignation at this canting hypocrite and fanatic, who while assuming to be a religious teacher was in fact delinquent in the first principles of humanity. So he answered the rabbi by saying: "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to water? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"

And when He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced for the glorious things that were done by Him."



CHAPTER XXVI.

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.

JESUS left Jerusalem about the close of the Feast of Dedication, or shortly before the beginning of the year, and His raising of Lazarus occurred certainly within a few weeks thereafter. Turning therefore again into Perea, His ministry in that province continued for nearly, if not quite, three months, or until the Feast of the Passover, celebrated in the month Nisan, corresponding with March–April. The Jewish method of calculating time was so different from our own, and withal so difficult to determine from the data available that the period of the celebration of the festivals can only be approximated. The Hebrew months were about twenty-nine days in length, corresponding to a lunation, so that the cycle of religious feasts commencing with the Passover, as Smith says, depended not simply on the month but on the moon. The usual number of months in a year was twelve, but as the year was also calculated by the seasons, another month was added every third year, so that some years had thirteen months; consequently the Passover feast, always occurring during the full moon, fell on different dates between the middle of March and the middle of April.

But though Jesus remained in Perea only a short while, within this period are compressed many of His most remarkable miracles, and during which He delivered His most impressive and beautiful parables. How extensive was His circuit in Perea we know not, but it was probably a large one, judging by His works and the extent of His teaching after turning His footsteps towards Jerusalem to attend the Passover. Luke says He went through the cities and villages of Perea, and was everywhere attended by large crowds, who received His teachings with much favor, and many believed on Him. So popular had He become that the Pharisees, being unable to withstand His growing fame, thought to frighten Him out of the country, and hence a party of them came to Him saying: "Get Thee out and depart hence; for Herod will kill Thee." But instead of exciting His fears, Jesus turned to them and said, "Go ye and tell that fox, behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Or in other words: "Herod is a crafty fox, and is jealous of the favor in which I am held; he is in great anxiety about His throne, and would no doubt kill Me if he could; but go back to Jerusalem and tell him that since it is given Me to cast out devils, I have the power to cast him out also, to circumvent any of his designs, for until the time of My offering up is at hand, no man may either bind or kill Me."

The report of Herod's purpose seems to have stirred in Jesus a reflective mood, and, thinking of the mercurial and vengeful disposition of His race, and of the Holy City in which so many crimes in the name of religion had been perpetrated, and of His own sacrifice which was now near at hand, He lifted up His voice in a spirit of lamentation : "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee ; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold your house is left unto you desolate ; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me until the time come when ye shall say, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' "

The Dropsical Patient.

So popular was Jesus in Perea that many Pharisees even courted His favor and showed Him many social attentions. One of these, who was a chief, or possibly a rabbi, invited a number of friends to meet Jesus at a dinner given at the Pharisee's house on a Sabbath, with half-sinister and half-friendly intention, no doubt to watch Him in social intercourse with the hope of discovering an act which might be interpreted to the people as an offence, and failing in this to leave the impression that they were favorable to His purposes and commended His teaching. The company were assembled, but had not yet lain down to the meal, when a man seriously ill of dropsy entered, not with the boldness of an invited guest, but with an abject appearance indicating his anxiety to see Jesus and to receive such help as doctors had been unable to give him. There he stood just within the threshold, in cowering attitude, apparently afraid to speak lest speech should emphasize his presence and cause the master of the house to eject him. But his bloated features, repulsive enough to have excused a postponement of the meal, were quickly noticed by Jesus, who, understanding the formalism and rigid observance of the Sabbath by those who surrounded Him, anticipated the objections which they would make to a deed of mercy performed on that day by asking the guests this question : "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day ?" But they refused to answer because they had heard Him reproach the inhumanity of the rabbi who condemned the healing of the rheumatic woman. Finding that the guests would not raise a contention over such an act of mercy He cured the man, and then again turned to the company to ask : "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day ?" But they saw the application of the inquiry, and held their peace.

The Invited Guests Send Their "Regrets."

As explained in a previous chapter, the couches on which the guests reclined at a Jewish feast were arranged on three sides of a square, the open side being

left for the servants to pass in and out when serving the dinners. The arrangement was also made so that the guests reclined according to their rank, the right hand corner being the place of chief honor, and the left end of the table-couch, the lowest in degree of dignity. This manner of disposal was necessary, because, in reclining, the head of each guest practically reposed on the bosom of the one directly above him, and as rank was critically observed, it would be an unpardonable offence not to make the proper distinctions, so as to avoid the placing of one of low rank next to one of high position. Thus the chief place of honor at the table was always anxiously sought, while each guest strove to get a position as high as possible. Christ seized upon this custom, which betrayed much unseemly vanity, to deliver one of His greatest parables. He introduced His illustrations by some preliminary instructions as to the proper rules to be observed by guests at a wedding feast, admonishing them not to crowd in and seize high places lest there should be men of higher rank present, whom, not to offend, the host will require you, much to your embarrassment, to take a lower place. But upon entering, the courteous man will seat himself at the least place of honor, for if there be others present who are not so honorable, these will be required by the host to move down, to give place to those who deserve a higher seat. And this deference to our superiors and courtesy to our hosts should apply also to our general conduct, and especially our attitude towards God, for "he who exalteth himself before either God or man, shall be humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted." Another custom which, before the time of Jesus, was peculiar to the Jews, was that of inviting the poor classes to feasts prepared from consecrated offerings left over after the altar sacrifices, but with the growth of castes and overweening pride, this kindly charity had fallen into disfavor, because the rabbis were so haughty and supercilious that the touch of the poor was to them a defilement. To rebuke the Pharisees and rabbis for their ambitions, ostentation and pride of self, Jesus therefore gave to them this parable.

Then said He, "When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee [return the invitation] again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee ; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

One of the company, who sat at meat with Him, comprehending the words of Christ, and evidently believing on Him, said, in praise of the illustration, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of heaven." But who shall receive this blessing? Not they who pander to the rich, or who hold themselves in exclusiveness with those who are highly favored, nor those who oppress the poor, or have no sympathy for the lowly and the suffering. For none of these

are heavenly gifts reserved, but for those who invite the poor and unfortunate, and with them share the blessings that have been given them, and who esteem their fellow-men to be not only of one race but of all races, nor of a single tribe or class, but those of all tribes, clans and classes, for the Kingdom of God is not for one people, but for the Gentile quite as much as for the Jew. And this great truth Jesus accentuated by saying :

Christ's Invitation to Supper.

A certain man prepared a great feast and sent out many invitations to friends who were rich, or influential, or otherwise favored, thinking that he would have a large and joyful company. When the supper was made ready he sent out his servants, as was the custom in Israel, to inform those who had been invited that their presence was now expected, for the meats were ready to be served. The host waited for some time the arrival of his friends, but after a great while of nervous expectancy and disappointment at their delay, he saw his servant returning, and he went eagerly to meet him and learn why the guests were so long in arriving. When a dinner is prepared it is a most provoking thing to have it kept unserved until the soup is cold, and the meats are overdone, and the vegetables become dry and ill-savored. And when this is due to the late arrival of those invited, there are few hosts who can feel jubilant. And this certain man no doubt felt worried and angered, so he eagerly inquired of his servant the cause of the delay. "Why," answered the servant, "every one that I have asked has had some excuse to make. Though none of them sent their regrets upon receipt of the invitation, yet they all now find it inconvenient to attend, and beg to be excused. One man says he has just bought five yoke of oxen and must try them to see if they are well broken : another tells me that he has purchased a piece of ground and must now go out and examine it : and yet another says he has married a wife and must spend the first days of the honey-moon at home. And so all alike had some excuse to make, so that none of those invited will come."

Receiving such a report, the Lord of the feast was very angry, as he had a right to be. But something must be done. There are large ovens full of meat, and vessels full of vegetables, and baskets laden with fruits, all ready for serving. It would be sinful to see all these things spoil, so if friends refuse to accept the hospitality extended, others must be brought in who will appreciate such good things as have been provided. So the man said to his servant : "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind ; seek out every hungry soul, give an invitation to every person, and don't overlook the children, the coatless, the shoeless, the poor little bodies that have been indifferently fed ever since they were born, for this shall now be a feast for the unfortunate." And the servant went out as

he was bidden and brought in a large crowd of half-starved and infirm humanity, but there was still room for many more. So he was bidden to go again, and not to confine his search to the streets and alleys, but to look also along the highways and hedges, among the hovels, down in the cellars where poverty huddles, and out among the shackly tenements where starvation holds revel with disease and pollution and crime. Bid all that you find in every dark place of famine to come, and those who cannot walk bring here in a conveyance of some kind. See to it that every poor person is brought to the feast, for none whom I first invited shall now share my bounty or receive my hospitality ; all shall be given to those who deserve it.

By means thus wisely taken the man's house was filled with guests, and he had a four-fold happiness in seeing the hungry mouths filled and the unfortunates of every kind reveling in the joy of the bounteous feast, in which they forgot their afflictions in feelings of gratitude for the hospitality of their generous host.

By this parable Jesus exposed the prejudices of the Pharisees and rabbis, whom He had invited to His spiritual banquet provided in that new kingdom, but who had refused to accept His offering, and He thus tells His hearers that since those who were bound to Him by racial ties had disregarded His offers of mercy and reward, He now extended His invitation to the poor of all nations, those rejected by the rabbis for their refusal to be bound by the rigid ceremonials and formalisms of the hierarchy, but who were more righteous in a true observance of the higher obligations imposed by God, a devotedness of heart, a love and reverence and gratitude to God for the blessings which He gives to all nations.

A Bleat from the Wilderness.

The increased popularity of Jesus in Perea was evidenced by the numerous applications which He had for discipleship, but He received very few, and these only upon the condition that they were ready to sacrifice everything, even to acknowledging a willingness to lay down their lives for His sake. To all who came expressing desire to be thus enrolled, He explained the implacable enmity to which he was subject, and also the persecution which all His followers must suffer, thus discouraging their ambition, but gladly received those who were ready to endure every hardship, and every loss, and every punishment, for that reward which He promised should be theirs hereafter.

Being among the outcasts, or those who had no fellowship with the congregations, Jesus was ridiculed by the Pharisees and scribes for associating with those whom they declared were both "unclean and despicable," and for which companionship they charged Him with violating the law and custom of all devout Jews. To these complainings He made answer by telling His critics again that

His mission was not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance ; that if they felt themselves to be sinless, how much more ought they to be desirous of reclaiming those who were yet in their iniquities, for God rejoices more over the saving



THE PRODIGAL'S DEPARTURE.—Drawn by Bida.

of sinners than at the prayers of those who need no repentance. "Why," said Jesus, "if you had a hundred sheep, and one of them should go astray, would you not leave the ninety-nine and seek the one that was lost? And finding it,

would you not feel great joy, and make a feast to your friends to celebrate its recovery? Or, if a woman having ten pieces of silver shall lose one, will she not seek diligently and sweep every corner, and look into every crack, until she find it? And in the joy of having found the lost piece, will she not tell her neighbors and make merry over her good fortune? Likewise say I unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

The Story of the Prodigal Son.

And again Jesus explained how great was the gladness in heaven over the redemption of sinners by relating another parable, one of the most exquisite illustrations ever framed in words.

There was a certain wealthy man who had two sons, both grown to manhood's estate, the younger of whom, having become tired of parental dependence, and anxious to see something of the world, came to him one day and asked for his patrimony, or such share of the estate as his father was willing to give him. He was evidently an indulgent father, for he at once made a division of his property, and gave the younger son a full third, and when the young man went away with his goods he took with him his father's blessings, and perhaps much excellent advice, and hearty wishes for his success and happiness.

And thus the young man went his way well provided into a far country to establish himself. Having considerable wealth he soon made many friends who showed great attachment and desire to assist him in spending it. Perhaps having little acquaintance with the ways of the world, its allurements, vices and crimes, the young man was easily influenced and he soon fell into riotous ways which directly wasted his fortune. You have known men toiling for twenty, thirty, forty years in commercial or mechanical life, having acquired large property, to lie down and die, leaving a great estate; and in five years the boys have got all through with it. So this young man and his money soon parted. I do not know just how it went; but there, in the first place, were his traveling expenses. A man who had been brought up as luxuriously as he evidently was, from the surroundings of that home, could not lodge just anywhere, nor be contented with plain fare. He had been used to see things on a large scale, and I do not suppose he always stopped to take change. I suppose that sometimes he bought things without any regard to their cost. Then, besides that, there came in the bill for his personal apparel; and a young man who had a third of his father's property in his pocket could not afford to go shabbily dressed; and so he must have clothes of the best pattern, and of the finest material. Besides that, the young man had to meet the bill for social entertainment. He must treat, and it must be with the costliest wines and the rarest viands.

Morning glories bloom when the sun is coming up, not when the sun is going down. There is no money left with which to meet his expenses. Besides that, the crops have failed, and there is a famine in the land ; and at a time when affluent men are straitened about getting their daily bread, what is to become of this poor fellow with an empty pocket and a discouraged heart? "Oh," you say, "Let him go to work." He cannot work. His hands, soft and tender, will be blistered with hard work. Perhaps he comes then to some place where he can get work, he thinks, adequate for an educated young man. He comes to a commercial establishment and asks for work. "No," says the head man of the business firm, "we can't have you. Why, you are nothing but a tramp of the street. Off of our premises." Perhaps he comes to the office of some official of the government, and seeks employment by which he can



TOMB OF JOSEPH THE PATRIARCH.

support himself. "No," says that officer, "a man clad as you are cannot find any employment in my office." What is he to do? In a strange land. Money all gone. No friends. Ragged. Wretched. Undone.

Only a Swineherd.

Realizing his impoverished condition and inability to improve it without accepting the most menial position, he finally, after many efforts to secure employment, obtained a place as swineherd to a hog-raiser of that country. What a fall from his former estate! What a contrast! From being the favored son of a rich and devoted father, and then the leader of a wanton crowd that held high revels in magnificent halls, dressed in costliest raiment, drinking the rarest wines, and dining amid splendors that are the accessories of kings, he fell, fell until he was nothing but a swineherd. Money all gone, deserted by friends, so hungry that gladly would he have eaten the draff, the leavings of the hogs that he tended; and no doubt he seized the husks of the beans upon which the swine were fed, and chewing them to extract the little sweet that was left, thought of how he formerly fared at his father's house, the soft bed in which he had slept, the cool porch on which he had rested in the heat of the day, the bounteous board at which he had feasted, and mentally exclaimed: "Oh, could I now but feed with my father's servants, or from the scraps that are daily thrown away from the table!"

Dejected, half famished and full of remorse, he became at length so agonized by his reflections that he resolved to go back to his father and, making an acknowledgment of his profligacy, to ask that he might hereafter be regarded as only one of the servants, for he felt his unworthiness to be called his son. And so "he arose and came to his father." He expected a chilling reception; but when yet a considerable way from the old home, coming down the road, dressed like a beggar, begrimed with the dirt of a long foot journey, and looking like a tramp that had no object in life except to appear miserable, his father saw him. The eye of paternal affection, with its wondrous penetration, discovered at first glance, through the mask of misery and severe impoverishment, the features of the son who had left months before arrayed in splendid raiment. And with a glad shout the father rushed out and down the dusty highway, and into the arms of his boy. What did he care for the tattered clothes, and the begrimed face, and the beggarly appearance? "My son! my boy!" and the tears gushed to his eyes as he threw his arms about his neck and covered the dirt of his cheeks with kisses, and hid his spattered breast with caresses. "But," says the prodigal, "I am unworthy to be called thy son." "Never mind that," answered the father, "it is enough for me to know that you have returned. I will hear your story later. My joy is too great to have it disturbed by any tale

of sorrow. Come up to the house;" and with his arms still around him the father led his boy until they came to the door, when he shouted with joy to the servants within, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." And they began to be merry.

The Great Feast of Rejoicing.

From all the windows of the old homestead bursts the minstrelsy. The floor quakes with the feet of the rustics, whose dance is always vigorous and



BEANS USED FOR FEEDING SWINE IN PALESTINE.

resounding. The neighbors have heard of the return of the younger son from his wanderings, and they have gathered together. The house is full of congratulators. I suppose the tables are loaded with luxuries. Not only the one kind of meat mentioned, but its concomitants.

The senior son stands at the corner of the house, a frigid phlegmatic. He has just come in from the fields in very substantial apparel. Seeing some wild exhilarations around the old mansion, he asks of a servant passing by with a goat-skin of wine on his shoulder, what all the fuss is about. One would have

thought that, on hearing that his younger brother had got back, he would have gone into the house and rejoiced, and if he were not conscientiously opposed to dancing, that he would have joined in the Oriental schottische. No. There he stands. His brow lowers. His face darkens. His lip curls with contempt. He stamps the ground with indignation. He sees nothing at all to attract. The odors of the feast coming out on the air do not sharpen his appetite. The lively music does not put any spring into his step. He is in a terrible pout. He criticises the expense, the injustice, and the morals of the entertainment. The father rushes out bareheaded, and coaxes him to come in. He will not go in. He scolds the father. He goes into a pasquinade against the younger brother, and he makes the most uncomely scene. He says: "Father, you put a premium on vagabondism. I stayed at home and worked on the farm. You never made a party for me; you didn't so much as kill a kid; that wouldn't have cost half as much as a calf; but this scapegrace went off in fine clothes, and he comes back not fit to be seen, and what a time you make over him! He breaks your heart, and you pay him for it. That calf to which we have been giving extra feed during all these weeks wouldn't be so fat and sleek if I had known to what use you were going to put it! That vagabond deserves to be cowhided instead of banqueted. Veal is too good for him!" That evening, while the younger son sat telling his father about his adventures, and asking about what had occurred on the place since his departure, the senior brother goes to bed disgusted, and slams the door after him. That senior brother still lives. You can see him any Sunday, any day of the week.

The father seeing his elder son so vindictively jealous, explained why he had made the feast, by saying, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It is meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found." Or, "It is not that I love you any less than your brother, but because he was long gone from me, and I feared I should never see him again, that his sudden return has given me such great joy, in which you should participate; for had your brother died you would no doubt have greatly grieved, and hence his restoration, when we thought him dead, should give you no less gratification."

And it is this joy that God feels when any sinner leaves off his evil ways and accepts the salvation which Jesus freely offers, for God is that indulgent and forgiving father who awaits with extended arms to welcome back every one who humbles himself in sincere penitence.

A Swindling Cashier.

Having presented a parable evidently intended for the benefit of the rabbis, who regarded no one as being worthy to be saved except ritual-conforming Jews,



RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL.- Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

He turned to the publicans and disciples, who composed a large part of the congregation, and related to them the parable of the unjust steward (Luke xvi.).

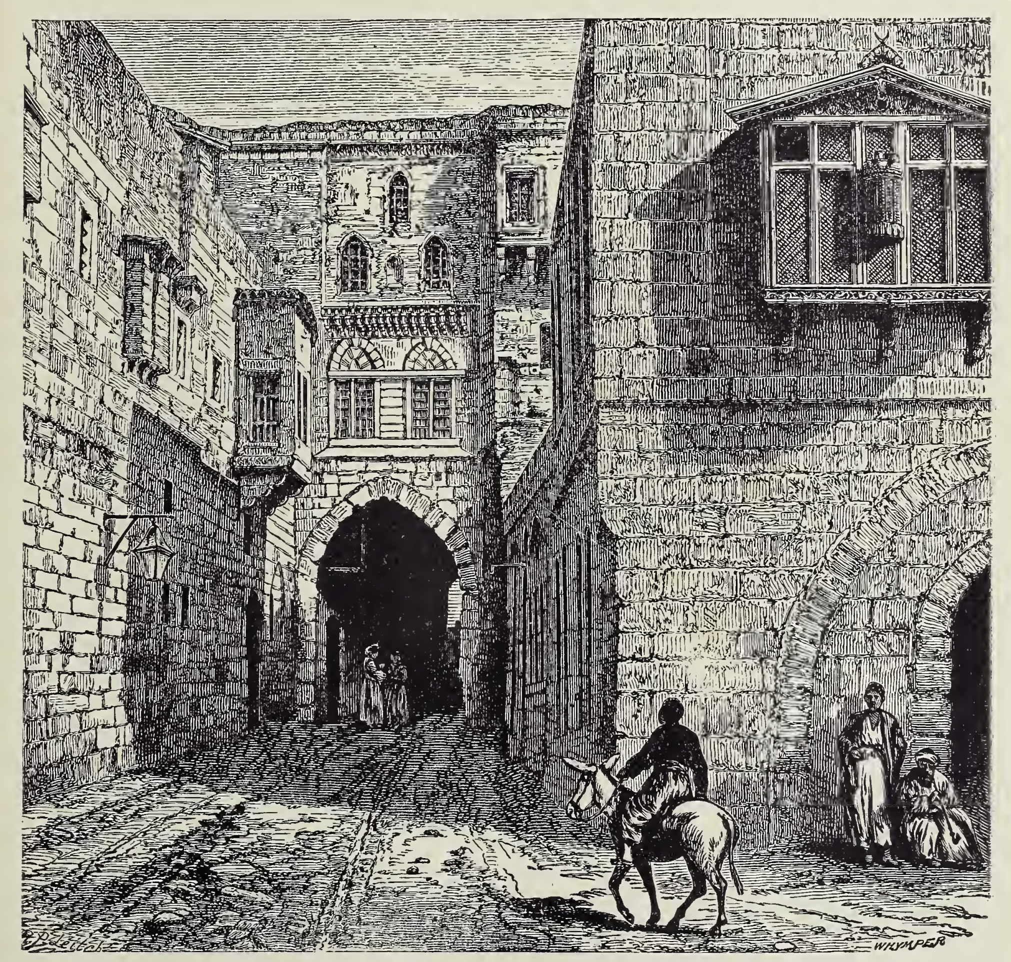
From this parable most writers shy off as though it were inexplicable. A bad steward finding he was going to lose his position, during the remaining days of his staying busied himself in making friends among the creditors of his employer by compromising their indebtedness, and where a man owed a hundred measures of oil let him off by paying fifty, and the man who owed a hundred measures of wheat was let off by paying eighty. The Palestine lord commended the keenness of the unjust steward. In uttering that parable Christ intended not to praise the scoundrelism of the unjust steward, but to suggest that it would be well if men were as keen and adroit in right directions as this man was keen and adroit in wrong directions. Christ saw, what we all know, that if men had as much ingenuity for God as they have for the world, the evangelization of the round earth would be a brief work. He saw that many of the soldiers of the truth would go into the battle armed with blunderbuss instead of keen rifle. Do not befog your mind by dwelling too much on the particulars of this parable, but take its large round totality of meaning—alertness for the right, as the unjust steward had alertness for the wrong. Disposition to take advantage of circumstances for religious purposes, as this man had disposition to take advantage of circumstances for fraudulent purposes. Whether you get good or evil out of this parable depends on whether you are a spider or a bee. If you are a spider you will draw out of it the poison of perplexity and unbelief. If you are a bee you will extract from it the honey of truth. I do with perplexing passages of Scripture what I do in summer time with the Atlantic Ocean. I go down to the beach and wade in and get from the mighty deep health and strength. I do not wade in deep enough to get drowned. What is the use of wading in until you cannot reach shore. Into this Atlantic Ocean of Divine truth wade in up to your heart, but do not wade in until it is over your head.

Parable of Lazarus and Dives.

In this parable we are made to stand in one of the finest private houses of olden time. Every room is luxurious. The floor, made of stones, gypsum, coal and chalk, pounded together, is hard and beautiful. From the roof, surrounded by a balustrade, you take in all the beauty of the landscape. The porch is cool and refreshing, where sit people who, having come in to look at the building, are waiting for the usher. In this place you hear the crystal plash of the fountains. The windows, reaching to the floor, and adorned, are quiet places to lounge in, and we sit here listening to the stamp of the blanketed horses in the princely stables. Venison and partridge, delicate morsels of fatted calf, and honey, and figs, and dates, and pomegranates, and fish that only two hours ago glided in the lake, and bowls of sherbet from Egypt, make up the feast, accompanied with

riddles, and jests that evoke roaring laughter, with occasional outbursts of music, in which harps thrum and cymbals clap, and shepherd's pipe whistles. What a place to sit in !

The lord of the place, in dress that changes with every whim, lies on a lounge, stupid from over-fed digestion. His linen is so fine, I wonder who washed it and



TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF THE RICH MAN AS IT APPEARS AT THE PRESENT TIME.

who ironed it. His jewels the brightest, his purple the rarest. Let him lie perfectly quiet a moment until we take his photograph. Here we have it : "A certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day." How accurate the picture ! You can see every plait in the linen.

and every wrinkle in the shirt. What more could that man have? My lord, be happy! After a while he leans over the balustrade and says to a friend in shining apparel, "Look at that fellow lying down at my gate. I wonder why the porter allows him to lie there. How disgusting! But our dogs will be let out of the kennel very soon and will clear him out." Yes, they bound towards him. "Take hold of him!" cries the rich man from the balustrade. The dogs go at the beggar with terrible bark; then take lower growling; then stop to yawn; and at the coaxing tone of the poor wretch, they frisk about him, and put their soft, healing tongues to his ulcers, driving off the flies, and relieving the insufferable itch and sting of wounds which could not afford salve or bandage. Lazarus has friends at last. They will for a while keep off the insults of the street and defend their patient. The man is far from friendless who has a good dog to stand by him. Dogs are often not so mean as their masters. They will not be allowed to enter heaven, but may they not be allowed to lie down at the gate? for John says of the door of heaven, "Without are dogs." But what is the matter with that beggar? He lies over now with his face exposed to the sun. Lazarus, get up! He responds not. Poor fellow, he is dead. Two men appointed of the town come to carry him out to the fields. They dig a hole, drop him in, and cover him up. The people say, "One more nuisance got rid of!" Aha! that is not Lazarus that they buried. It was only his sores. Yonder goes Lazarus, an angel on his right hand, an angel on the left, carrying him up the steep of heaven—talking, praising, rejoicing. Good old Abraham stands at the gate and throws his arms around the new-comer. Now Lazarus has his own fine house, and his own robes, and his own banquet, and his own chariot, and that poor, sickly carcass of his that the overseers of the town dumped in the potter's field will come up at the call of the archangel, straight, and pure, and healthy, corruption having become incorruption.

Now we will go back a minute to the fine Oriental house that we spoke of. The lord of the place has been receiving visitors to-day as the doorkeeper introduced them. After a while there is a visitor who waits not for the porter to open the gate, or for the gatekeeper to introduce him. Who is it coming? Stop him there at the door! How dares he come in unheralded? He walks into the room, and the lord cries, with terror-struck face, "*This is Death. Away with him!*" There is a hard thump on the floor. Is it a pitcher which has fallen, or an ottoman which has upset? No. Dives has fallen. Dives is dead! The excitement in town is great. The grooms rush from the barn to see. All the great folks of the neighborhood who used to sit at his dinners come in. The grocer from whom he got his spices, the butcher from whom he got the meat, and the clothier from whom he got the garments, come to find out all about it.

The day of burial has arrived. He is carried down out of his splendid room



LAZARUS AT THE DOOR OF DIVES.

and through the porch into the street. The undertaker will make a big job of it, for there is plenty to pay. There will be high eulogies of him pronounced, although Christ represents him as chiefly distinguished for his enormous appetite and his fine shirt.

The long procession moves on, amid the accustomed weeping and howling of Oriental obsequies. The sepulchre is reached. Six persons carrying the body go carefully down the steps leading to the door of the dead. The weight of the body on those ahead is heavy, and they hold back. The relics are left in the sepulchre, and the people return. But Dives does not return. He who had all the wines he could drink now asks for plainer beverage. He wants water. He does not ask for a cupful, or a teaspoonful, but "just one drop," and he cannot get it. He looks up and sees Lazarus, the very man whom he set his dogs on, resting joyfully in Abraham's bosom, and he calls to the Patriarch and begs him to allow Lazarus to put his finger in water and let him lick it off. Once Lazarus wanted just the crumbs from Dives's feast; now Dives wants just a drop of water from Lazarus's banquet. Poor as he can be! He has eaten the last quail's wing. He has broken the last rind of the last pomegranate. Dives the lord has become Dives the pauper. The dogs of remorse and despair come not with healing tongue to lick, but with relentless muzzle to tear. Now Dives sits at the gate, while Lazarus, amid the festivities of heaven, fares sumptuously every day.

The social gulf which separated Lazarus from Dives in this world is not nearly so great as the spiritual chasm which separates them in eternity, between which there is no way of passage. And so Abraham replied to Dives's cry for water, "Remember, that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

This was poor consolation for the tormented spirit of Dives, but it served to quicken his anxiety for those of his brothers yet living, who were in imminent danger of a like punishment. So he begged Abraham to send to them and warn them of their peril; but he was answered: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them, and if these they will not regard, neither would they be persuaded from their wanton, luxurious and unmerciful ways though warned by one who had risen from the dead."

Jesus did not, by this parable, condemn the acquisition of wealth, but its wrongful application. A man of wealth is not necessarily a sinner, otherwise there would be no great philanthropists to spread gifts of colleges, and churches, and hospitals for the education, salvation and relief of the poor; but Jesus had in mind the haughty, vain and self-sufficient rich, who, like the Pharisees, use their wealth to oppress the less fortunate, and to make a vulgarly ostentatious show of their advantage, the pride, pomp and circumstance which lead men away from God.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SEPARATION OF THE CHAFF FROM THE WHEAT.

HOW hard and unyielding must have been the nature that remained unmoved at the Lord's relation of the parable of the prodigal son, and how impenitent the soul that took not to itself the lesson taught in that of Dives and Lazarus. But the rabbis who stood about Jesus heard both without feeling more than the sting of self-condemnation, and this only excited their anger because of such public revealment of their faults. But so truthful and forceful were the illustrations which Christ gave that, realizing their inability to raise popular objection, the rabbis seemed to have retired in abashment for a time, leaving Jesus alone with His disciples. The occasion was now utilized by Christ to further instruct His followers, and to forewarn them against the divisions, disputes and persecutions, which would assail them in their ministries. Said He, "Offences must need come; misrepresentations in every form will have to be met, and under them many who even now feel strong in righteousness will succumb and yield to the influences of those who oppose Me. But these evil instigators will not go unpunished; yea, indeed, it were better for them had they never been born, or that a millstone were bound about their necks and they cast into the sea; for no iniquity is so great as that of men who not only reject the gospel themselves, but who strive by every means of prejudice, bigotry and contamination to induce those seeking salvation to abandon their holy ambitions and return to their sins. To prevent these insidious enemies from sowing seeds of discord and worldliness in the hearts of those who have a desire to live in a true spirit of righteousness, and to spread the gospel of truth throughout the world, recourse to unwearying prayer is necessary. My followers who would remain steadfast in their devout purpose must humble their pride and cultivate a forgiving disposition; they must be patient under all adversity and hold themselves ready to pardon all offences, when the offenders seek repentance. However often you may be wronged, yet for My sake forgive freely whenever the spirit of contrition moves the guilty to seek your favor, for My kingdom shall be founded upon love, upon humility, upon limitless forgiveness, upon charity and upon all those holy attributes which distinguish the righteous man and call forth the approval of God."

This discourse which Jesus gave to His disciples aroused their misgivings, for not having yet fully comprehended the spiritual condition necessary to a

thorough conception of their apostolic duties, and not being wholly free from the bonds of the law as interpreted to them by the rabbis, they could not at once accept the rightfulness of returning good for evil, and doubted the strength of their faith to maintain a spirit of forgiving meekness under the infliction of wrong. But while thus feeling their own weakness, they were all the more anxious for a re-enforcement of their ambitions to become faithful servants, and believing that it might be given them by Jesus, they showed their desire and humbleness by praying Him to increase their faith.

To their request Jesus replied by assuring them that true faith was as yet but a germ in their hearts, which would develop only by persistency of prayer; "for," said He, "if you had even the smallest measure of faith, you would find no difficulty in doing all that I have commanded, and a great deal more; things which appear to be impossible to you now, would be easy to accomplish if you had that spiritual strength which cometh from belief. If you had proper faith and should say to this sycamore tree, 'Be thou plucked up by the roots and planted in the sea,' it would obey you."

But with development of their faith and the increasing power which it gave them, Jesus particularly admonished them against permitting pride to supersede their humility, since their advancement in spiritual benefits could only be made by constant dependence in Him, and to impress this fact more firmly upon them He defined the relation which a faithful servant should sustain towards his master, accounting a fulfillment of all the servant's duties as unworthy to be specially praised, because he had rendered only what had been required of him. "And," said Jesus, "you are the good servants who should perform your duties while on this earth, looking to God for reward; nor should you regard only the reward, but perform your services through a spirit of love for Me and for the satisfaction that a conscientious discharge of your obligations will afford, since God deserves of you more than you can give."

The Empire of the Soul.

It was a happy relief to Jesus to escape even for a short while the company of such malevolent spirits as the Pharisees and rabbis, but He was not permitted to enjoy this peaceful riddance long, for very soon they found Him again and renewed their molestations and angry accusings. Said one of these, one day to Him, "Master, if Thou be the Messiah, as You claim, will You tell us when the kingdom of God will come. It has been promised for a long while, and You have also been many years on the earth, and yet we perceive no signs of the fulfillment of our hopes."

And then Jesus answered, "Already have I told you, but you are so spiritually blind, so prejudiced, so bigoted, and so firmly attached to the things of this

world that you could not understand me. Everything that you see is colored by your worldly ambitions; your expectations have been of a political Messiah; one who would come as a god of war to fight the enemies of Judah, and overwhelming them with the sword of slaughter, establish a Jewish kingdom and make of it the glory of all the world. But instead of a god of war, I am come as the God of peace, to set up a kingdom in the hearts of men, to establish a universal brotherhood, to destroy sin and its hideous consequences, and to redeem the world by bringing all people and all nations to God. Therefore say I, Lo, here is the kingdom of God; it is in your midst, for I am the Messiah, and wherever I am, there also is that kingdom."

The Pharisees were troubled by the answer which had thus been given them, for having seen many of the wonderful works performed by Jesus and listened to the marvelous wisdom of His teachings, they seem to have begun to slightly appreciate the importance of preparing themselves for entering the kingdom which He had declared. This semi-belief, however, in the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah, was soon destroyed by the hostile rabbis, who did not cease their scoffings, and to ridicule with all manner of revilings. When, therefore, Jesus was again alone for a short while with His disciples, He resumed the subject of His answer to the Pharisees, saying: "The kingdom of God is indeed truly come, but before its final triumph the subjects of that kingdom will have passed through many tribulations. Men will strive to show you signs of its appearing, and some will say, 'Lo, it is here!' and others, 'Lo, it is there!' or, 'See here,' or 'See there!' but regard none of these, for they are intended to catch the credulous and to lure them to destruction. When the Son of Man shall come for judgment it will be as the lightning for suddenness. As it was in the days of Noah, when the floods came to swallow up the world after men had refused to repent, and as it was when Sodom was consumed for its offences, so shall it be again when the Son of Man reveals His power. In that day those who have not prepared themselves, as did Noah and Lot, by prayer and repentance, will be destroyed; nor time given in the last moment of their lives to seek salvation. As there are good and evil in every family, as the righteous and the sinful mingle together in their social or business relations, there will be a division among families and among societies, the good being separated from the bad, and the evil delivered up for punishments while the righteous shall go to their reward."

A Hard Judge.

And to emphasize the declarations which He had made, and to illustrate the efficacy of prayer, Jesus gave to His disciples another parable: "There was," said He, "a certain judge who was so impervious to moral principles that he neither feared God nor regarded man. A confirmed pessimist and misanthrope,

who saw no trait in human nature but selfishness, nor knew any motive transcending that of self-indulgence in carnal pleasure. And in the same city was a widow who came to him asking for judgment against her adversary. With characteristic indifference to the justice of her complaint he rudely dismissed her. But she would not be discouraged, and was so importunate in her request that to escape the worriment of her petitionings the judge said: 'Though I fear not God, nor regard men, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'"

Applying this parable to the lesson which He sought to impress, Jesus said, "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

The application of this parable does not represent God in the character of an unjust judge, or as wearying with the repetition of prayer, but is given to show that if a man, unmindful of the rights of others and thoroughly conscienceless himself in everything that appeals to the moral nature of man, can be prevailed upon by persistency of importunings to do his duty, how much more will God grant the prayers of those who approach Him in humility and who by their persistence in prayer reveal the earnestness of their faith? The parable is therefore an incentive to constant prayer, to a continual revealment of faith in the mercy of God and the belief in its ultimate manifestation in behalf of the petitioner.

Pomposity and Humility.

And again being surrounded by bigoted Pharisees, who made an ostentatious show of their righteousness by vaunting selfishness, Jesus turned to them and related another parable, of the Pharisee and the publican:

What is the matter with the Temple of Jerusalem? Is it on fire? It looks like a mansion just kindled with flame. Why, it is the hour for morning sacrifice, and the smoke bursting through the door and crevices of the building wreathes the mountain top in folds of smoke through which glitter the precious metals gathered and burnished by royal magnificence. I see through the smoke two men going up the steps of the building. They go side by side, and yet they have nothing in common—they have no sympathy with each other. One is a Pharisee, erect, arrogant, pompous, looking down with utter contempt upon the poor man who happens to be going up beside him. The other is a publican, who goes up with head bowed, and who seems to have a world of trouble. Now the two have reached the main enclosure, and they are about to begin worship. The Pharisee goes to the gate nearest the Holy of Holies. He feels that he is fit to stand there. He says in substance: "O God, there are two days in the week when I eat

absolutely nothing, and I give a great deal of money to good objects, and I am one of the best of men. I have nothing to do with the common rabble—certainly nothing to do with that poor publican who came up the stairs the same time I did.'' The publican goes clear off to the other side. He wants to get as far away from that gate leading into the Holy of Holies as possible. He does not feel fit to



THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE.

stand there. The Bible says he stood afar off, and then—as the people of the East to this day do when they have any great trouble, smiting themselves—he bowed down, striking his breast, and crying out : ''God be merciful to me a sinner.'' The incense that went up from the high-priest's censer that morning was not so sweet as the publican's prayer wafted into the opening heavens, while

the exhilarant prayer of the Pharisee dies on his contemptuous lip and rolls down into his arrogant heart. Now I see them again on the stairs. They are going down side by side. The Pharisee cross, sad, wretched ; the publican glad-hearted, the joys of heaven glowing in his cheek and flaming in his eye. "I tell you," said Jesus, "this publican's prayer was approved by God rather than the vain-glorying petition of the Pharisee : for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The Holy Bonds of Marriage.

In the time of Christ there were two rival schools, led respectively by rabbis Schammai and Hillel, which were in opposition in the construction of certain Mosaic laws, among which that of divorce was a principal question. Hillel was the father of our modern free-lovers, voluptuaries, those socialists in family economy who regard women as nothing more than a creature for a man's convenience, with no rights above that of a beast of burden that receives only his provender for the service it performs, and which may be disposed of without excuse or accountability. Schammai held the reverse views, esteeming woman as much a creature of God's love as man, and hence that divorce was justified only for offences against chastity, and that such crimes were equally great whether committed by husband or wife.

This question of divorce having divided the rabbis, some of them thought to confound Jesus by asking Him to interpret the law, for, however He might decide, one of the schools must become offended and He might thus be drawn into a bitter dispute ; therefore they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause !" The custom of divorcing wives for any cause had become so general that the whole Jewish nation degenerated into the grossest sensualism, and love become a synonym of carnality, like that which degrades the Neapolitans of to-day, and which Humbert is using all his kingly prerogatives to correct.

However serious the question, Jesus answered it with His usual wisdom and fearlessness, and by so doing raised woman from her servile condition of the time to a lofty eminence of love and purity, which she occupies to-day. Said He, "Have you not read that God created man and woman to be husband and wife, and to be help-meets to each other ; and are you ignorant of the blessings which God placed on marriage, and that in instituting that sacred bond He ordained that there should be no relationship on earth so dear, so binding, so holy as that of man and wife ; for is it not written that the woman shall leave all and cleave to her husband, and that he shall make equal sacrifices for the sake of his wife? If therefore God instituted marriage, who shall set aside the ordinance at pleasure?"

"But," asked they who questioned Him, "did not Moses permit divorcements, and for no better excuse than the wish of the husband?" "Yes," answered Jesus, "Moses gave laws permitting divorce, but it was not because he approved the dissolution of marriage, but rather to prevent greater evils, which had their beginning when the race was in bondage. What Moses did, under advisement to restrict the immoralities of the people which dishonored marriage, were acts which served the purpose of temporary expedients, and are not binding upon the race under conditions which have since obtained. Nor could the laws given by Moses contravene those established by God, by whom we are all bound."

Not entirely satisfied with the answer Jesus had made to the Pharisees, some of the disciples requested Him to explain further His objections to divorce, if it were wrong to seek divorcement for any cause, or if it were advisable to marry. And He answered, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." In other words, there are men, and women too, so untrue in their nature and so deformed in disposition that, while they cannot refrain from marriage, yet marriage is an unnatural condition for them, since congeniality and compatibility are not possible, and constancy is least likely to follow from the union of such persons. Recognizing this, and holding to the highest law, "what therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder," Jesus did not exhort all people to marry, only such as were qualified for marriage; those who regarded it as a sacred bond to be dissolved only by God Himself, and who would so assimilate with the one of their choice that the two lives thus united would be indeed as one.

A more glorious teaching than this was never given to man. Marriage, which God established and blessed in Eden, and which Jesus defended, and sanctified, and glorified in disputation with the host of sensualists who surrounded Him, has become by the influence of His doctrines the holiest ordinance that beautifies and irradiates the altars and hearthstones of the whole Christian world. And by Christ's words also was womanhood emancipated from her servitude to man, and enthroned as queen and joint ruler with her husband, and as an equal integer and factor in the world's economy, political, social and domestic.

Christ Among Children.

The mothers who stood about Jesus and heard with leaping hearts of joy His eloquent endorsement of marriage, and His elevation of women to the royal dignity of queen of the home, were thrilled with such gratitude that it is no wonder they brought their little children to receive His blessing. It had been an

immemorial custom for fathers to take their young children to the synagogue, there to receive blessings of the elders, and this practice was now to be hallowed, not by elder or rabbi, but by the High Priest of the world, whose great heart should be the door through which little ones were to pass in countless procession to the end of time, to swell angel bands that serenade the Lord with hallelujahs and doxologies. It was not the first time that Jesus had showed His love for little children, for how often did He use them in His grand lessons to teach humility, dependence on God, and purity of heart. "Except ye become as little children," "Except ye be born again and become as a little child;" these were made to serve as objective lessons to His disciples and to Nicodemus.

See the glad mothers coming with their cooing babes, and their laughing toddlings, and their rosy-cheeked boys and girls fresh from a romp, because not yet old enough to know what the gathering about Christ means. See them pressing through the crowd and making their way towards Jesus, who sits with smiling face and outstretched hands ready to receive them. His disciples, however, thinking that such a tumultuous presentation of children will annoy their Master, rebuke the anxious mothers, telling them to stand back and be more seemly in their manners, and more regardful of the comfort of the Great Teacher, who has no time to spend with curious women and noisy infants. But Jesus answered His disciples, "I need no guard to protect Me against such ovations; let them come, it is My joy to receive them; so much innocence, so many pure hearts, it is a reminder of heaven from which I have so long been separated. Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." And with loving hands He blessed every little head in that assemblage, perhaps kissed all the little happy lips, and smoothed the brow of every little cherub, feeling that here were the buds, tender and beautiful, that would flower into red rose, and alabaster lily, and carmine pink, and blushing carnation, and variegated tulip, and sweet jessamine, in His garden of spiritual exotics, a transplantation of the flowers of infancy of this world into that grand conservatory which Jesus has prepared to receive them. Children, who love their mother better than any one else, struggle to get into His arms, and to kiss His cheek, and to run their fingers through His hair, and for all time putting Jesus so in love with the little ones that there is hardly a nursery in Christendom from which He does not take one, saying, "I must have them; I will fill heaven with these; for every cedar that I plant in heaven, I will have fifty white lilies." And so He loved them, and blessed them, and holding His loving hands above the little heads about Him, said unto those who stood near, the disciples and Pharisees, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."



CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN. — Drawn by Bida.

A Radical Question.

As Jesus departed to continue His journey, a ruler of the local synagogue, and one whose exemplary life had no doubt greatly endeared him to the people, came running to Jesus, and kneeling before Him, as a mark of his inferiority, said, "Good Master [or venerated rabbi], what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The request, made as it was by an exhibition of reverential and humble spirit, indicates sincerity, and gives us to believe that the young ruler had been soulfully impressed by Christ's teachings, even if he did not fully accept Him as the Messiah. Jesus stopped and answered: "Why call Me good, when there is but one perfect one, who is God. If you ask Me what is required of you, I refer you to the commandments, which declare that thou shalt not kill, or steal, or bear false witness, or be covetous or adulterous, and that thou shalt honor thy father and mother, serve only one God, keep the Sabbath day, show mercy, and that thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And the young man replied, "All these have I kept from my youth up."

Did the young ruler believe that he had fulfilled all the commandments, or was there a sense of something yet lacking, which prompted him to apply to Jesus for instructions as to what more he should do? He must have felt that while obeying the letter of God's law he was not perfect in its spirit, which is indicated both by his request and by the final answer which Jesus gave him: "Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

The ruler had thought himself a devout man, and as his life perhaps had been spent in religious duties, he no doubt believed that his loftiest aim was to perfect himself for that higher kingdom into which he hoped at last to gain entrance, with many others whom he was striving to lead the same way. If he had been asked, "Are you willing to make any sacrifice that would secure your admittance into heaven?" he would have promptly responded, "Yes." But now he was put to a test that would prove whether or not he was sincere or false to himself. He was rich and a ruler, probably a rabbi, and with wealth and dignity, he was also affected by custom, training and association. He was impressed by the knowledge that the poor were despised, oppressed and subjected to sufferings of many kinds, while the rich luxuriated in the delights of pride, power, advantage, ambition, and all the comforts that money can supply. He therefore cast his eyes toward the ground, but only in momentary reflection, for his mind was soon made up; he could not exchange his proud position on the terms offered; no, not even if by so doing it insured him the reward of heaven. And he turned away sorrowfully.

As the rich young man went on his way, sad of heart but resolute in purpose never to surrender his wealth, Jesus said to His disciples: "How hardly shall



THE RICH YOUNG MAN.—Drawn by Bida.

they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." The disciples who heard this could not understand the saying, and asked : "Who then can be saved ?" Was not David a rich man ? and was not also Job, and Jacob, and Abraham, and Joseph, and were they not saved ? Jesus did not mean that no rich man would ever enter the kingdom of God, but that wealth so bound men to material affairs, which was particularly true during the period of the Jewish hierarchy, and in the time of Christ, that spiritual matters were made secondary to worldly concerns ; that love for the glittering preferments which wealth supplied chilled holier aspirations, so that rich men were married to the world rather than to the church, and became ambassadors of sin, instead of accepting poverty on earth that thereby they might become plenipotentiaries of heaven, Yet, while this is true of men in general, there are exceptions, deplorably few, in which rich men are found advancing the glory of God by a liberal use of their possessions, and for these as well as for the poor, Jesus gave the promise of great reward,—a life everlasting in the world to come, and manifold blessings in the present time ; for God has the power to wean the hearts of even wealthy men from their riches.

A Vintage Scene.

Having explained the fullness and glory of the rewards which were reserved for those who cheerfully make sacrifices for His sake, Jesus likened the mercy and generosity of God to a householder who owned a large vineyard, and the vintage being at hand he sent out his servants to hire laborers to gather the crop. Several were engaged in the first hour of the morning at a denarius, or sixteen cents per day, to work, but he had not secured all the labor needed ; so in the third hour the master going into the market-place and finding other idle men, these he also engaged, promising to give them what was just for their work. And again he went out the sixth and the ninth hours and found yet others, whom he also sent into the vineyard with like promise to pay them what was just. At the eleventh hour the master found yet other workmen idle who had been thus far unable to obtain employment, and these he likewise hired, with no other agreement than his promise to pay them what was right.

When the day's labor was finished the owner of the vineyard instructed his overseer to call in the laborers and pay each of them, without regard to the number of hours they had worked, the sum of one denarius, beginning however with those who had been sent into the vineyard at the eleventh hour. These having each received a denarius, they went away satisfied ; likewise those engaged at the third and sixth hour ; but when those who were hired at the first hour received also a single denarius each, and learned that the same amount had been paid to those who had worked only a single hour, they rose in complaint against the

householder, saying, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day." But he answered them: "Have I not paid you the sum that I agreed to give? Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?"



THE DISSATISFIED LABORERS.

"So," said Jesus, "the last shall be first, and the first last in My kingdom; for many be called, but few chosen." Or, in other words, "Those who labored throughout the day did so for the sake of a specified reward, while those who engaged at the later hours did so relying only upon a promise that they should receive what was just. It is these latter who compose the few chosen for reward in My kingdom."

This parable was spoken to the disciples to show the willingness of our Lord to reward not for the amount and duration of the labor expended in the service of bringing the world to repentance, but in proportion to the sincerity and trustful faith exhibited by His followers.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON THE WAY TO DEATH.

OUR Lord was now near the Jordan, on the border of Judea, and having decided to return to Jerusalem, His route lay through Jericho. The disciples, understanding the extreme peril which was before them, knowing the hostility of the rabbis, who were anxious to get Him within their power, followed Him with reluctance and an exhibition of great fear, though they still secretly hoped that His death would not be accomplished, if at all, until He had established the Messianic Monarchy, which He had seemed to foreshadow. Perceiving their anxieties, and that the disciples did not yet fully comprehend His mission, Jesus took them apart from the multitude that was following, and said: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, and they shall mock Him, and they shall spit upon Him, and they shall kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again." But explicit as was this prophecy, the disciples could not reconcile it with other declarations of Christ referring to the glory of His kingdom, which they always regarded as material, and while they were in fear for themselves they still entertained a belief in the miraculous deliverance and glorious Messianic manifestation of Christ in the supreme hour of danger.

Peter, John and James, who occupied the most confidential attitude, and stood in more intimate relationship with Jesus, were yet the most ambitious of the apostles, but, afraid themselves to approach Christ with request that He would declare to them the preference which might be given them when His kingdom should be established, they applied to Salome, the mother of John and James, and besought her to become an intercessor in their behalf. This duty she undertook, but not alone, for she took with her John and James, and finding Jesus in secret she fell on her knees before Him, in an attitude of worshipful devotion, and begged His favor, saying, "Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom."

Whether this petition was made with a clear conception of what the kingdom of Christ meant, or that it was out of a desire, founded upon belief in the ultimate triumph of our Lord and the setting up of a kingdom on earth, we know not, but the reply which Jesus made indicates that the real ambition of John and James was to share the perils and to exhibit their unflinching loyalty when the supreme

trial and predicted death should occur, for, replied Jesus, "Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" And they answered with heroic fidelity, "We are able." With loving compassion, knowing that they did not understand the anguish and suffering which He was to endure, but foreseeing the martyrdom which would end their earthly labors, Jesus said to them, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by My Father."

When the other disciples heard of the ambitious requests of John and James they were moved with indignation, but Jesus called them about Him and explained the unworthiness of their aspirations, "For," said He, "you think only of a kingdom of this world, where men may sit to govern and to have great power, but My kingdom, I must again tell you, is not of this world, and in My kingdom men are not appointed to rule over others, but those who would be great must prepare themselves by being humble, for those who seek to be greatest shall be servants to all. Even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

Healing of Blind Bartimeus.

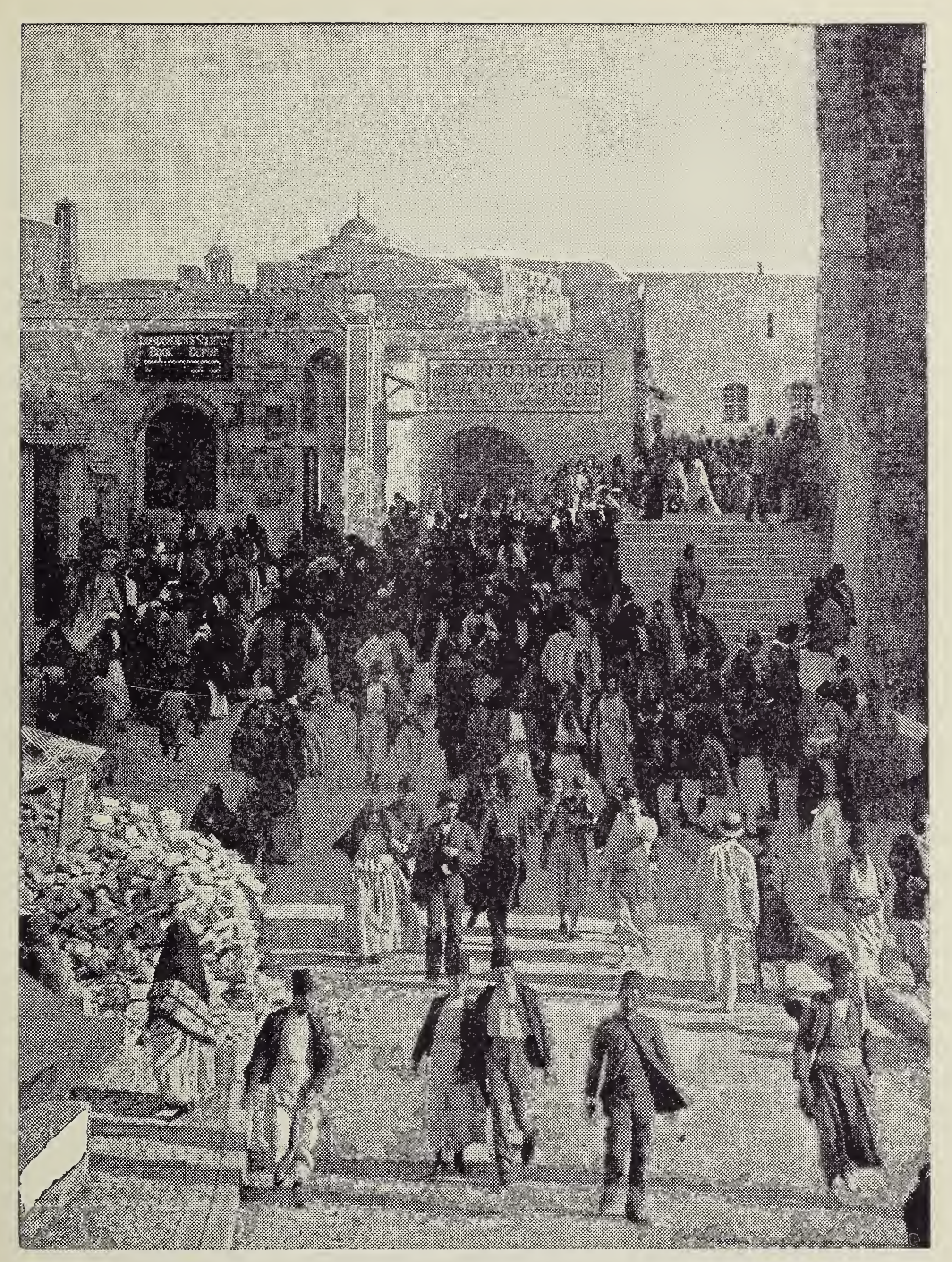
The Passover was now near at hand, when the Judean hills were green with bursting spring-time and the hill-slopes were abloom with flower of orchard, and the copses musical with song of birds. The procession following Jesus now entered the old historic city of Jericho, still surrounded by frowning walls and bristling with silenced battlements. Here was already gathered an immense crowd, as it was a congregating place for those coming from Galilee and Perea on the way to Jerusalem. Our Lord was no doubt tired when He reached this city, and as a little while would intervene before the celebration of the Passover He thought to tarry here a short time. Everywhere He had gone His labors of healing and teaching had been continued, and now He sought a rest, but scarcely had He passed the town limits when another call was made upon His illimitable mercy.

Beside the road that led into the city, and near the gate, there were scores of beggars of every description, just as I found them at nearly every city I visited while in the Holy Land last year. Custom in this particular has not changed much. Among these objects of charity blindness was, and is to-day, the chief affliction, because of the ignorant prejudices of the people with regard to early applications of remedies, and principally on account of inflammation produced by the sudden changes of temperature and exposure of poor persons to the inclemency of heavy night dews.

Among the number sitting by the gate asking alms from those passing by were two beggars, only one of whom is named, because his appeals for mercy indicate that he had heard of the cures of Jesus, and had looked forward with anxious hope for His appearing. Bartimeus, one of the blind men, hearing the noise of a passing multitude, asked of some who were near him the cause, and being informed that it was Jesus and the vast crowd that followed Him, he began to cry out at the top of his voice, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." So loud was his cry that the people were disturbed, and tried to suppress him, but this only caused him to shout louder and with greater vehemence. The cry reached the ears of Jesus, who was always listening for a complaint of suffering, and halting, He requested that the two men be brought to Him. Some of the people thereupon said to the two, "Hush your cries, for Jesus is now calling you." The stoppage of voice gave greater impulse to throbbing heart, and with joy immeasurable, and radiation of face that showed almost like transfigurement, the poor blind creatures rose, and in their exuberance tore off their coats, which, being in rags, fettered free movement, and would have run distractedly in anxiety to meet their Restorer. But they had no reason to move, for Jesus had approached them and said, trying their faith, "What will you that I should do unto you?" "O Lord," they answered, "restore to us our sight." Their cry of earnestness showed how great was their faith, and Jesus, first touching their eyes, said, "Go your way; your faith hath saved you." Oh, wondrous act! Four lighthouses set up at the harbors of two mortal souls long in darkness, under the shining of which the world sailed in and dropped anchor. "And immediately they received their sight, and followed Him, glorifying God; and the people when they saw it gave praise to God."

Christ is Entertained by Zaccheus.

Jericho was an important seat of commerce, next in rank to Capernaum, and being also a Levitical city, it contained many publicans and priests, whose hostility towards each other had passed into by-words, because it was so long-protracted and irreconcilable. Among the publicans who stood as chief of his colleagues was one named Zaccheus, who was a politician as well as a tax-gatherer. He had an honest calling, but the opportunity for "stealings" was so large that the temptation was too much for him. The Bible says he "was a sinner"—that is, in the public sense. How many fine men have been ruined by official position! It is an awful thing for any man to seek office under government unless his principles of integrity are deeply fixed. Many a man, upright in an insignificant position, has made shipwreck in a great one. As far as I can tell, in the city of Jericho this Zaccheus belonged to what might be called the "Ring." They had things their own way, successfully avoiding exposure.



PRESENT VIEW OF THE STREET OF THE TOWER OF DAVID, JERUSALEM.
From *The Christian Herald.*

Notwithstanding his bad reputation, there were streaks of good about him, as there is about almost every man. Gold is found in quartz and sometimes in a very small percentage.

Jesus was coming to town. The people turned out *en masse* to see Him. Here He comes—the Lord of Glory—on foot, dust-covered and road-weary, limping along the way, carrying the griefs and woes of the world. He looks to be sixty years of age when He is only about thirty. Zaccheus was a short man, and could not see over the people's heads while standing on the ground; so he got up into a sycamore tree that swung its arm clear over the road. Jesus advanced amid the wild excitement of the surging crowd. The most honorable and popular men of the city are looking on, and trying to gain His attention. Jesus, instead of regarding them, looks up at the little man in the tree, and says, "Zaccheus, come down. I am going home with you." Everybody was disgusted to think that Christ would go home with so dishonorable a man.

I see Christ entering the front door of the house of Zaccheus. The King of heaven and earth sits down; and as he looks around on the place and the family, He pronounces the benediction: "This day is salvation come to this house."

Zaccheus had mounted the sycamore tree out of mere inquisitiveness. He wanted to see how this stranger looked—the color of His eyes, the length of His hair, the contour of His features, the height of His stature. "Come down," said Christ.

He had more than his curiosity satisfied, for his reward was salvation, the greatest, grandest and most glorious that God can give.

When the Jews saw Christ accepting the hospitality of a publican, and one, too, against whom charges of dishonesty had been preferred, they raised their voices in bitter revilings. But Jesus had become familiar with upbraidings, and regarded them so little now that He did not even reply to His critics, as He had so often done in the earlier part of His ministry. When the two had been a short while in conversation, Zaccheus became so impressed by the magnanimity of Jesus, in braving public opinion and accepting fellowship with one so despised, that he determined to make an avowal before the people by way of both acknowledging Jesus and accepting His teaching. Therefore, said he, standing up before the Lord and the large assemblage about the door of his house: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." And Jesus said to him, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Parable of the Nobleman and the Ten Talents.

After Zaccheus had thus made his acknowledgment of conversion by an exhibition of the true spirit of repentance, Jesus related a parable to the people, who were gathered about the house, taking for His subject the varying fortunes of Archelaus, but applying the similitude to His own requirements.

Many of the parables were more graphic in the times in which He lived than they are now, because circumstances have so much changed. In olden times, when a man wanted to wreak a grudge upon his neighbor, after the farmer had scattered the seed wheat over the field and was expecting the harvest, his avenger would go across the same field with a sack full of the seed of darnel grass, scattering that seed all over the field, and of course it would sprout up and spoil the whole crop ; and it was to that Christ referred in the parable when He spoke of the tares being sown among the wheat. In this land our farms are fenced off, and the wolves have been driven to the mountains, and we cannot fully understand the meaning of the parable in regard to the shepherd and the lost sheep. But the parable of the Talents can be easily understood in all lands and ages. It is built on money, and that means the same in Jerusalem as in New York. It means the same to the serf as to the czar, and to the Chinese coolie as to the emperor. Whether it is made out of bone or brass, or iron or copper, or gold or silver, it speaks all languages without a stammer. The parable runs in this wise : The owner of a large estate was about to leave home, and he had some money that he wished properly invested, and so he called together his servants, and said : "I am going away now, and I wish you would take this money and put it to the very best possible use, and when I come back, return to me the interest. To one man he gave $9000, to others he gave lesser sums of money ; to the least he gave $1800. He left home and was gone for years, and then returned. On his arrival he was anxious to know about his worldly affairs, and he called his servants together to report to him. "Let me know," said he, "what you have been doing with my property since I have been gone." The man who had received the $9000 came up and said, "I invested that money. I got good interest for it. I have in other ways rightly employed it ; and here are $17,000. You see I have nearly doubled what you gave me." "That's very good," said the owner of the estate ; "that's grandly done. I admire your faithfulness and industry. I shall reward you. Well done—well done." Other servants came up with smaller accumulations. After a while I see a man dragging himself along, with his head hanging. I know from the way he comes in that he is a lazy fellow. He comes up to the owner of the estate and says : "Here are those $1800." "What !" says the owner of the property, "haven't you made it accumulate anything ?" "Nothing—nothing." "Why, what have you been about all these years ?" "Oh, I was afraid that if I invested it, I might

somehow lose it. There are your $1800." Many a young man started out with only a crown in his pocket, and achieved a fortune; but this fellow of the parable, with $1800, has gained not one farthing. Instead of confessing his indolence, he goes to work to berate his master, for indolence is almost always imprudent and impertinent. Of course, he loses his place and is discharged from the service. The owner who went out into a far country is Jesus Christ going from earth to heaven. The servants spoken of are members of the Church. The talents are our different qualifications of usefulness given in different proportions to different people. The coming back of the owner is the Lord Jesus returning at the judgment to make final settlement. The raising of some of these men to be rulers over five or two cities, is the exaltation of the righteous at the last day, while the casting out of the idler is the expulsion of all those who have misimproved their privileges.

And another parable He gave them in this wise: There was a certain man owning vast possessions of land which for years had yielded so bounteously that for a while he was at a loss to know how he would be able to store his crops. But at length he conceived the idea of building larger barns in which he would hoard not only his crops but his other goods also, which were so great that he could thereafter say, "Behold, I am the richest man of my neighborhood." So vain did he become under the inspiration which prompted him that he said to himself, rubbing his hands and chuckling with intense satisfaction, "Now that I am rich, I will take no heed of time or worry myself over the future, but will spend all my days eating, drinking and making merry." But in the night when he was alone, when there seemed to be a weird quiet upon him, he heard the voice of God, saying, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

"So is he," said Jesus, "that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." So it is with those who waste their opportunities to do good.

The Kingdom of God can only be obtained by a wise use of our advantages, in which the happiness of others should be quite as much our ambition as the enrichment of ourselves. "For," said Jesus, "the Kingdom of heaven is like a man seeking a goodly pearl, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Or, in other words, the Kingdom of heaven is all about us and which we may obtain by a diligent search for it. If by our devotion to God we discover means for doing the largest amount of good in a particular field, then it is our duty to apply all our energies in that work which yields its abundance of righteous fruits, for there will we find the Kingdom of heaven.

And to impress, upon those whom He taught, the importance of using our abilities in earnest endeavor to perform the most useful service, Jesus gave another parable in re-enforcement of the other. Said He, "A certain man had a fig tree which produced no fruit for three years, and being angered at its unfruitfulness he called his servant and told him to cut it down, since it was so useless as to even cumber the ground, taking up space which might be used for a bearing tree. But his servant answered him, 'Don't cut down the tree yet; it has never been properly nurtured; with some spading up of the ground about its roots and some manure added to enrich the earth around it, I think in another year it will bear well; if, however, after such cultivation it is still barren, then cut it down.'" This parable not only illustrated the necessity of cultivating ourselves for the higher duties by inciting in us an ambition to give our best efforts to a service that will benefit mankind, but it was specially directed to those Jews who had for long centuries produced no works of righteousness; who were like a barren tree which put forth leaves, but yielded no fruits. For their barrenness God had thought to cut them off, but Jesus comes as the servant, saying, "I will teach them their obligations; I will call them to repentance; I will strive to set up in their hearts a worshipful feeling; I will endeavor to root out the vanities which have alienated them from God, and give them a nourishment which will stimulate them to nobler ambitions, that they may produce fruits unto righteousness. If they still prove unfruitful then let them be cut down, but not until they have been given opportunity to improve the advantages which I offer them.'"



CHAPTER XXIX.

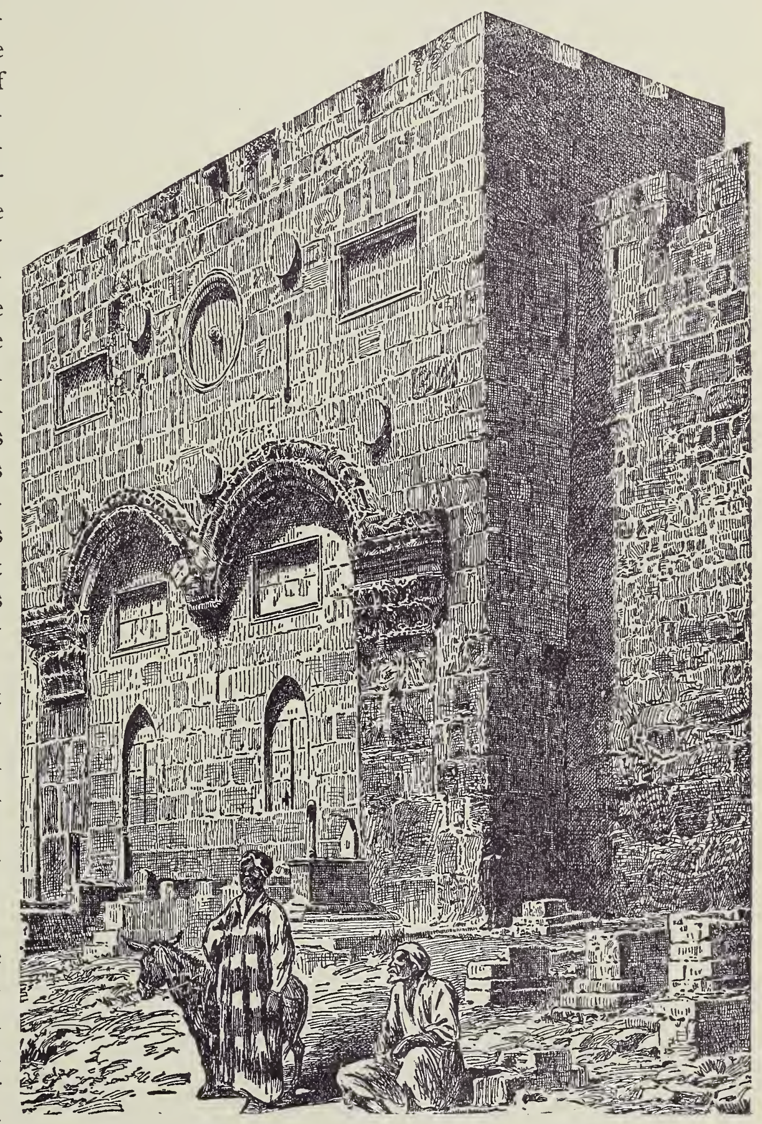
JESUS AT THE VILLAGE HOME.

JESUS may have found some rest at Jericho, but it was not in a cessation of His merciful labors, nor was Zaccheus the only one who confessed the evil of his ways and made public acknowledgment of faith in Christ, for to Jesus was here drawn a great multitude who would accompany Him on the journey to Jerusalem, and participate in the hallelujahs which would be sung there in His praise.

Jesus was aware that the counsel of Caiaphas had been adopted, and that all who knew Him were commanded to report His presence to the Sanhedrim whenever He might be found, that He might be arrested and made to answer the judgment which had been rendered against Him. But this did not in any wise abate His desire to attend the Passover feast, where He was to receive an ovation before being brought to the cross. Accordingly, He set out for Jerusalem, accompanied by an immense multitude of people, who, while knowing the order of the Sanhedrim, held Him in such estimation that they refused to report Him. Nor would report now have hastened His apprehension by the officers of the hierarchy, for He had the temporary protection of an army of devoted followers, who had seen His mighty works and believed on Him. Passing on down the rugged gorge of the Kedron, the procession continued its journey towards Jerusalem, until reaching the village of Bethany (on a Friday), Jesus stopped with His disciples to spend the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday of our reckoning) with His friends, Lazarus, and Mary and Martha, and Simon whom He had healed of the slow death of leprosy. It was a family group, for one tradition says Simon was the husband of Mary, and another represents him as the father, while every circumstance recorded points to him as an intimate of Lazarus and the two sisters.

The apostles neglected to give us any particulars of this visit at Bethany, beyond a mention of the fact that the presence of Jesus drew many people to the place, who came not alone to see Him, but to see Lazarus also. The wrath excited in the Pharisees and rabbis by the miraculous resurrection of Lazarus, followed as it was by a sudden conversion of the masses to a belief in Jesus as the Holy One sent by God, was such that the chief priests decided to execute Lazarus. By this murderous act they expected to destroy one of the principal witnesses to the Messiahship of Christ, and then to overcome with threatenings

those who had been present at the restoration. Understanding their designs, Lazarus doubtless became a fugitive, and it is not improbable that he returned to his home in Bethany about the time of Christ's visit, if not in His company. This supposition accounts for the eagerness of the people, as stated by John, to see Lazarus, since there appears to have been quite as much curiosity to behold him as there was to see Jesus. Says John, "Much people of the Jews therefore knew that He [Jesus] was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead." If Lazarus had remained at home after his resurrection, the curiosity of the Jews about Jerusalem to see and talk with him would have long before been gratified, though it is possible that the curiosity spoken of by John was manifested only by the Jews who had newly arrived from remote parts of Galilee and Perea to attend



THE GOLDEN GATE.—From *The Christian Herald.*

the Passover. But as Lazarus had been condemned by the chief priests, it is more plausible to suppose that he had been a fugitive until the time of Christ's visit. If this be true, we may picture the joy that came to that household ; the delight which the presence of Jesus gave, re-enforced by the return of a beloved brother who had been hunted for his life for many months, during which interval a thousand misgivings and fears for his safety must have agitated the hearts of his loving sisters. What a pleasant Sabbath ; what a joyous reunion ; and yet how much of sorrow must have mingled with that happiness. Did Mary and Martha and Lazarus know that this was the last Sabbath they were to pass in Christ's company, and that before the next should dawn they were to behold Him in the arms of crucifixion ? Compassionate to the sorrows of others, perhaps Jesus did not tell them ; it would have given Him no relief ; it would have been no balm to His mental agonies ; it would have been no consolement to His anguished heart. In that hour of felicitation over the return of a persecuted brother, and the joy which His own precious presence gave, Jesus would give no revealment of the great tragedy which was so near at hand ; over that bright day of supreme happiness He would cast no cloud of sorrow ; into those glad hearts He would throw no pang of poignant grief, but in their presence would affect delight, even if He felt it not ; the rapture of meeting again with His dear friends should not be marred by reflections on His own impending fate. And so we may believe that the last Sabbath in Bethany was spent in the pleasure of prayer and in social enjoyment.

A Lane of Hosannas.

Many Jews had gathered at Jerusalem from all parts of the nation several days before the Passover, to submit themselves to the rites of purification ; and as the presence of Jesus at Jericho had probably been reported, He was made the chief topic of conversation by the assembled Jews. Some of them thought that Jesus might already be in the city, but in hiding, and many sought for Him ; for once before He had suddenly appeared on the Temple porch when every one believed that He dared not show Himself in Jerusalem. But others expressed the opinion that He would not come again, because of the order given by the chief priests and Pharisees to arrest Him. They believed so long as He remained in the country districts, where His followers were numerous and the power of the chief priests limited, He would be comparatively safe ; but if He should venture into the stronghold of the Pharisees, He would be promptly taken and put upon trial for His life.

But while the Jews were debating the probability of His venturing into Jerusalem, Jesus was preparing to make His public entry. On the Monday morning (our Sunday) following the Jewish Sabbath spent in Bethany, Jesus and His disciples set out afoot for the Holy city, but at the Mount of Olives, at the little

village called Bethphage, which was a suburb of Jerusalem, He sent forward two of His apostles, commanding them to bring to Him a she ass, and her colt which had never yet been ridden, and which they would find tied at the edge of the town. The disciples departed quickly upon the appointed errand and finding the ass and colt, as had been told them, they brought the two to Jesus, who mounted the latter and prepared to make His entry into the priest-ridden city, where His enemies were clamorous for His life. Zechariah had prophesied that the Messiah would be so poor that He could afford no better conveyance than an ass, and that upon such an animal He would make His entrance into Jerusalem, and behold now this prophecy was about to be fulfilled.

His movements were so quickly reported to the Jews in the city that scarcely had the morning dawned and the olive gardens begun to wave with light, when crowds of wondering people began to assemble along the way from top of Olivet to wall of Jerusalem. But instead of meeting officers coming with writ, or incensed Jews clamoring for His life, Jesus meets with thousands ready to prostrate themselves with reverence or lift their voices with praise. Behold Jesus on His triumphal march! Let none jeer now or scoff at this rider, or the populace will trample him under foot in an instant. There is one long shout of two miles, and as far as the eye can reach you see wavings of demonstrations and approval. There is something in the rider's visage, something in His majestic brow, something in His princely behavior, that stirs up the enthusiasm of the people. They run up against the beast and try to pull off into their arms, and carry on their shoulders the illustrious Stranger. The populace are so excited that they hardly know what to do with themselves, and some rush up to the roadside trees and wrench off branches and throw them in His way, and others doff their garments—what though they be new and costly!—and spread them for a carpet for the Conqueror to ride over. "Hosanna!" cry the people at the foot of the hill. "Hosanna!" cry the people all up and down the mountain. The procession now comes to the brow of Olivet. Magnificent prospect reaching out in every direction—vineyards, olive groves, jutting rock, silvery Siloam, and above all, rising on the throne of hills, the most highly honored city of all the earth, Jerusalem. Christ there, in the midst of the procession, looks off, and sees here fortressed gates, and yonder the circling wall, and here the towers blazing in the sun, Phasælis and Mariamne. Yonder is Hippicus, the king's castle. Looking along in the range of the larger branch of that olive tree you see the mansions of the merchant princes. Through this cleft in the limestone rock you see the palace of the richest trafficker of all the earth. He has made his money by selling Tyrian purple. Behold now the Temple! Clouds of smoke lifting from the shimmering roof, while the building rises up beautiful, grand, majestic, the architectural skill and glory of the earth lifting themselves there in one triumphant doxology, the frozen prayer of all nations.

The crowd looked around to see exhilaration and transport in the face of Christ. Oh, no! Out from amid the gates, and the domes, and the palaces there arose a vision of that city's sin, and of that city's doom, which obliterated the landscape from horizon to horizon, and He burst into tears. "He beheld the city, and wept over it."

After pronouncing the woe that was to come upon Jerusalem, and which was fulfilled scarcely forty years later (A. D. 70), when Titus sacked the city, demolished its splendors, and put its inhabitants to the sword, Jesus proceeded on to the Temple. Dismounting and leaving His beast He entered that Holy sanctuary and took possession of it as the true representative of Jehovah. Here the sick and the otherwise afflicted flocked about Him and He healed them all, so that voices of gratitude mingled with acclaims of praise. Here He stood, not only within the city of His enemies, but in the most sacred courts, fearless of evil, yet merciful to all. "Hosanna to the Son of David," was the cry from ten thousand throats, which striking column and pilaster, and pillar, and wall of cedar and of silver and gold, was flung back in numberless echoes, like the glory-giving of an angel band.

"See," said the jealous and malignant Pharisees, "the whole people have gone after Him." Yet, with all their indignation they dared not arrest Him, but stood with lowering brows and compressed lips, transfixed by His words of just accusation, and heard even the children lift their voices in praise. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise, that Thou mightest put to shame thine enemies, and silence Thy foes, and those who rage against Thee."

A Fig-Tree Withers Under Jesus' Curse.

When the afternoon was far spent, Jesus left the Temple after prayers, and returned with His disciples to Bethany. While on the way He felt great hunger, having passed the day without food, as the crowd had given Him no opportunity to refresh Himself. Espying a fig-tree by the road-side, He approached it, thinking that, though it was not the time for fig gathering, it might have some ripe fruit still on its branches. The whole region abounds with figs and dates, from which fact both Bethany and Bethphage take their names, and among the varieties is one which holds its fruit throughout the winter. The tree to which Jesus came was no doubt one of these, and seeing the leaves green and apparently thrifty, He found among the foliaged pretension no fruit. But He turned this circumstance into a practical lesson, which He set forth before His disciples and others who may have been with Him. The tree was a type of Israel, and of the rabbis and Pharisees, who, while boasting of their piety, and making ostentatious display of their love for Jehovah, were at heart hypocrites, vain to be seen, but wholly useless in the service of God. So Jesus said to the tree, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever."



JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

Circumstances plainly indicate that this incident occurred while Jesus was returning to Bethany after the exhausting excitements of the day spent in Jerusalem, when He would most likely be hungry, for it is wholly improbable that such hospitable and devoted friends as Mary and Martha and Lazarus, with whom He must have sojourned, would have allowed Him to depart from their home breakfastless. So it appears by the reading of Mark. The disciples heard His curse of the tree, but did not perceive the effects until the morrow, when, surprised to behold it dead, they remarked to one another, "How soon is the fig-tree withered away!" To which Jesus answered, "Verily, I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea,' it shall be done."

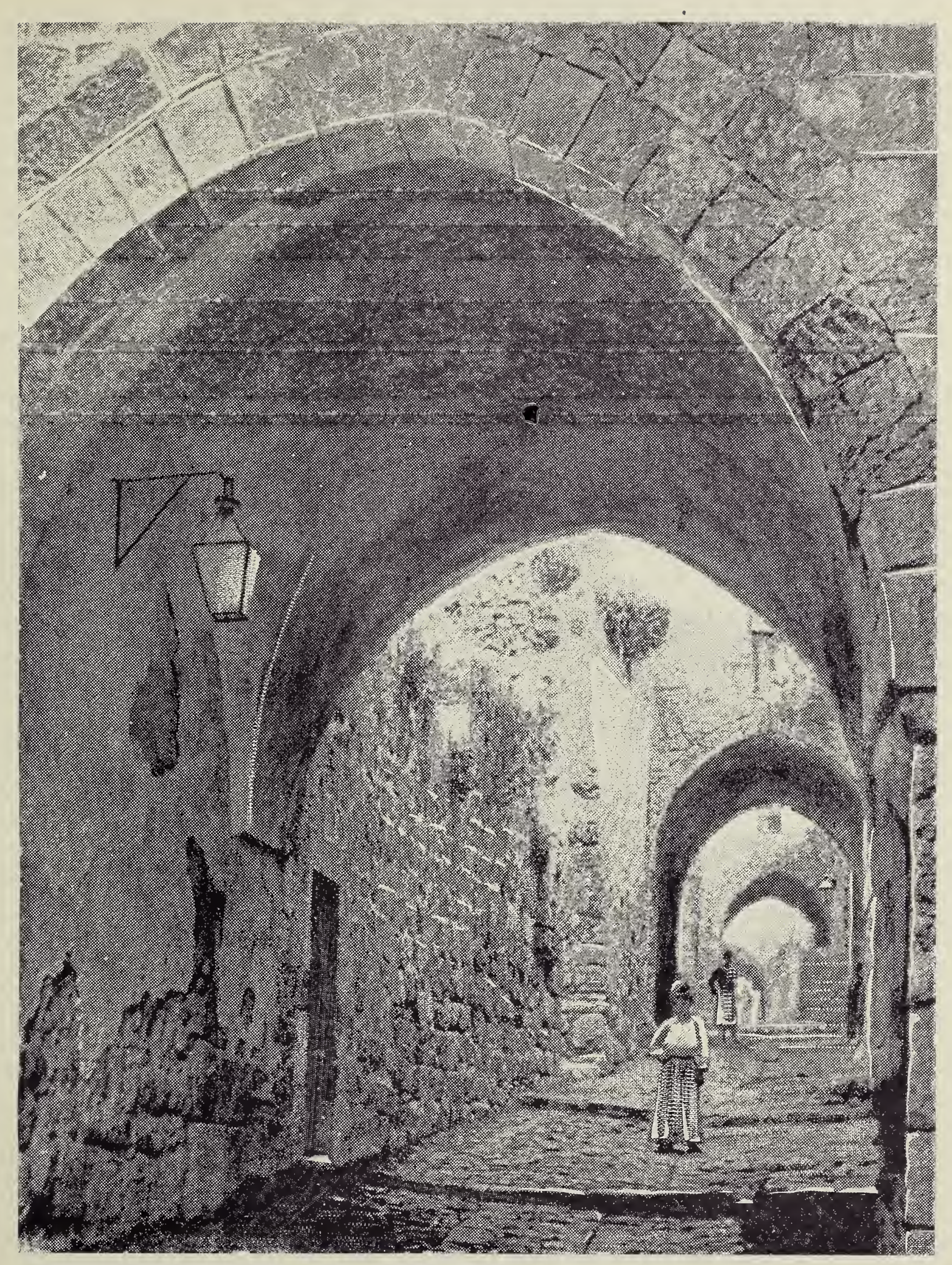
Rome Arrayed Against Jesus.

The fervor and loyalty displayed by such a vast multitude for Jesus, and His assumption of authority, as well as the public rebukements which He made of the hypocrites who had so long ministered in the sanctuaries—the more bitter because so well deserved—fairly paralyzed the Pharisees, but they were forced to restrain their consuming anger because of their fear of the people. After the day of Christ's great triumph had ended, His enemies began to consult as to the most advisable means for staying the popular favor and carrying out the recommendations of Caiaphas. Heretofore the charges preferred against Jesus were of a nature which the Roman law could not take cognizance of, as they involved merely accusations of violation of rabbinical laws and customs, but while endangering the power of the hierarchy, His acts could not be construed as threatening the stability of the state.

After consulting for a time, the chief priests evolved a plan for bringing Jesus before the higher court, which alone had power to impose the death penalty. In pursuance of their nefarious conclusions they accordingly charged Him with treason against Rome for having declared Himself king. They understood with what jealousy the Roman government regarded the Messianic promises, and how anxiously the Jewish nation was looking forward to the coming of a new ruler; and they were mindful also of the fact that numerous insurrections in Judea had served to render the Romans harsh and prompt in their treatment of every act of insubordination that gave indication of treasonable spirit towards the Emperor. They also knew the temper of Pilate, and relied on him to give hearing to their charges against Jesus, of "perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that He Himself is Christ a king."

Ye Have made my Father's House a Den of Thieves.

As Jesus knew the doom which was near at hand, He gave Himself no concern for the plottings of His enemies, and the morning following His triumphal



STREET LEADING TO THE PALACE OF HEROD, JERUSALEM.—From a Photograph obtained in Palestine by Rev. Dr. Talmage.

entry, He arose early from His lodging in Bethany and going up to Jerusalem repaired again to the Temple. His appearance on the Palm Sunday was in the assembly chamber of the Temple, where He preached to the people, but His second visit was to the outer court of the Temple, where He precipitated a scene of scarcely less excitement. Two years before He had driven out the mercenaries who flocked to the court for the purpose of barter, but some time after His departure they returned again, by permission of the Temple priests, set up anew their bazaars, and resumed their trade in the selling of animals and doves for sacrifices, and exchanging money ; the desecration had also extended to the conversion of the court into a common highway, or street, over which passed the principal travel between the upper and lower parts of the city. When Jesus beheld again the noisy assemblage of buyers and sellers, and saw how the profanation of the Temple had become even greater than before, His indignation was intense, exceeding that which He felt when He first discovered the base uses to which the Temple had been converted, and with scowling brow and flashing eye of holy indignation He again descended upon the desecrators of His house, and with mighty arm overturned the tables of the changers, and tore down the booths of those that sold doves, and drove out the herds of lowing oxen, and of bleating sheep, and the men who owned them, shouting to the dealers the while, "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

This act of Jesus purifying the Temple was hardly intended as a punishment of those who had profaned it by the selling of sacrifices, but served rather as a sign of the early fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah, who lamented over the decay of the nation through vanity and worldly ambition, which he declared would ultimate in the possession of the Temple by a strange people who would dispossess the Jews. It was also significant of the wrath of God for the iniquities of the priesthood, who had subordinated their holy functions to the spirit of gain.

After clearing the courts, He again entered into the Temple and taught the vast crowd that had there assembled, and the same scenes of prayer and thanksgiving and healing which characterized the day before were re-enacted. But the Pharisees, though yet afraid to seize Him, or to make the charges which they decided to prefer, assumed a greater boldness, so that, at the conclusion of the day's services, Jesus took His departure secretly and with the Twelve repaired to Bethany.

Jerusalem was in an uproar, and especially the chief priests. Thousands had acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, and His teachings and purification of the Temple had increased enthusiasm for Him just in proportion that it had intensified the malicious hatred of the hierarchal party. The priests were supposed to exercise a vigilant care of the Temple, and to hold it inviolate for sacred uses, and therefore the emphasis with which Jesus exposed their hypocrisy and mercenary promptings, their patronizing assumptions and airs of holiness,

associated as it was with their furtherance of a profanation of the Temple for the bribe that was given them, created in them fears that they would lose the respect of the people. For this reason they deferred a presentation of their charges against Jesus until a more auspicious hour.

The Open Conflict.

The next morning, after a second time retiring to Bethany, He was again in the Temple, as He was every day thereafter until the day preceding His arrest, and renewed His preaching to the people regardless of the dangers which were rapidly gathering about Him. Though declaring Himself the Messiah, He was careful to give no offence to the Roman government, nor was it in the nature of His mission to offend against any law; but, nevertheless, the chief priests would not cease their efforts to bring Him in conflict with the authorities, hoping to secure such action from these as would lift responsibility from themselves, for they feared a conflict with the masses of Jews, who openly confessed their devotion to Jesus. In pursuance, therefore, of their plans, while Jesus was walking through the Temple, possibly on His way to the altar, He was rudely intercepted by several of the chief priests, scribes and elders, who demanded to know by what authority He drove out the dealers and money-changers, and by whose permission did He preach such doctrines, and at whose instigation did He so fiercely condemn the empty ceremonials and the vapid prayers and the meaningless forms of worship which the priests practiced?

To their churlish inquiry Jesus returned a response which was as full of satire as it was of vexation to them. Said He, "Before I reply to you, permit Me to ask you one question, which if you will answer I will freely tell you by what authority I do these things: Was the baptism of John from heaven, or was it of man?" The priests and elders dropped their heads in an attitude of reflection, and though probably tempted to answer, caught and drew back the reply which they had intended to make, for, after reasoning awhile, they said to themselves: "If we say from heaven, then will Jesus ask us why we did not believe Him? And if we say his baptism was of men, then will the people, who believed John was a great prophet, probably Isaiah risen, attack us and drive us in ignominy from the Temple." And so to avoid compromising themselves, they answered, "We cannot tell." "Then," said Jesus, "since you know nothing of John's mission, having taken no means to inform yourselves, I will not tell you by whose authority I act."

Having silenced the scribes and elders by the confounding answer which He made to their impertinent question, Jesus repaired to the altar, and, having in mind the inquiry which He had happily replied to, related a parable of

The Promise Broken and the Promise Kept.

A certain man had two sons, whose services he greatly needed in gathering the crop of his vineyard, which was now ripe. He was very anxious that they

should go immediately, for there was an immense vintage, which if not gathered quickly would spoil upon the vines. Therefore the father went to one and said, "Son, go to work to-day in my vineyard." But, instead of obeying, he made a flat refusal. He answered, "I won't go; if father wants that vineyard looked after, let him get somebody else to do it, or else attend to the matter himself. I have other affairs to look after." But after a while he began to soliloquize, and said within himself: "I wonder if this is treating father as he ought to be treated? What a pity it would be to have all those grapes spoil. Isn't it mean in one to refuse to do that which is so very reasonable? Here, I am not ashamed to confess I was wrong, and I will just go and attend to this matter. Father, where is the knife? and at what end of the arbor do you want me to begin?" Bravo! It is a grand thing to see a young man, or an old man, when he is wrong, to confess it, and try to do right. I want nothing to do with a man who does not know how to make an apology.

And the father went to his second son and asked him also to go into the vineyard, to which request a ready reply came: "Yes, sir; I will go. It is very right that I should serve you. Those grapes ought to be picked. You will be surprised how many ripe clusters I shall gather into the baskets before nightfall. Yes, sir; I will go, father." But though he promised, and affected a gladness to serve his father, he did it only to deceive, for he had no intention of doing any labor in the vineyard: he would leave the crop either for his father to gather or to rot on the vines.

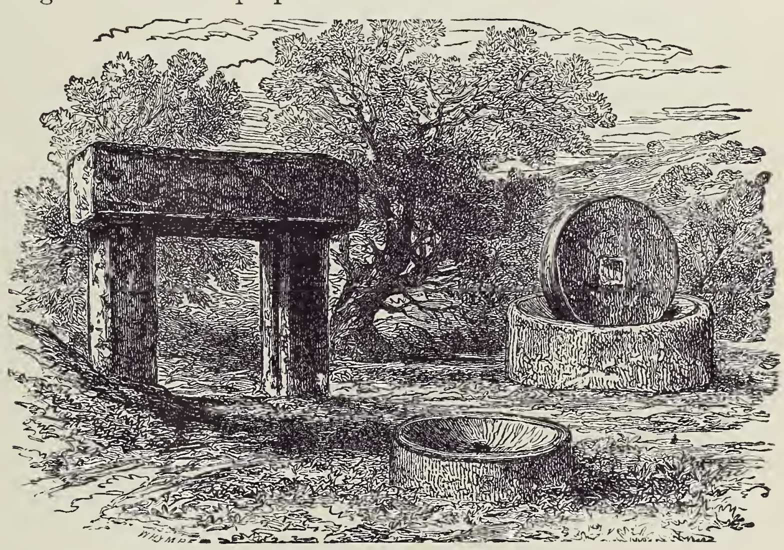
This parable was given to illustrate the insincerities of many who are ostensibly in the service of God, and is applicable to thousands to-day, just as it was appropriate then to show the Jews how remiss they were in their real duties and obligations to God. Those who first refused obedience, but who afterwards entered willingly into the work, were the Jews who first repented at the call of John and who came also to acknowledge Jesus because of the deeds He did showing His true Messiahship, and because of the forcefulness and humaneness of His teaching.

Those who promised obedience only to deceive, were the priests who were teaching in the Temple while practicing all manner of deceits, who were using their priestly powers for selfish interests, to the demoralization of true religion. And Jesus asked them which of the two sons did the will of their father, to which they answered, "The first." "Yes," said Jesus, "and verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards that ye might believe him."

The Wicked Husbandmen.

And seeing the scribes and the rabbis silent under the illustration of their hypocrisies, Jesus related to them another parable, thus:

A certain proprietor planted a vineyard and prepared it in the most costly manner by setting out a hedge, or building a wall around it to keep out depredators, and he made a wine-press, and a cellar in which to store the wine, and erected a tower in which to station guards to protect the crop, and having thus made it a splendid vineyard, he rented it to husbandmen, or wine growers, for a percentage of the product, after which he went away on a long journey. When the season of vintage arrived the proprietor sent three of his servants to the tenants with instructions to collect his lawful share of the crop. But when the servants came to ask for the owner's share, the wicked husbandmen, or tenants, set upon them, killing one, and beat the two others with sticks and stones until they were glad to escape with their lives. The owner, having heard the report of the manner in which those whom he first sent had been treated, was, no doubt, very angry and disappointed, but instead of bringing the husbandmen to justice for their brutality, he sent a half-dozen other collectors on the same errand, but these were as mercilessly treated as the first three had been. But though his servants had been most shamefully abused, still the owner was patient, having no desire to resort to extreme measures, so he thought over the matter, how he should collect his share of the crop, until a happy idea came to him: "I will send my son; certainly the husbandmen will have respect for him. It may be that my servants were too importunate or insulting in their demands, or perhaps the tenants questioned their authority and were provoked into rage. But I know that my son has an amiable disposition and he will give no occasion for offence; besides,



WINE AND OLIVE PRESS.

the husbandmen will be more disposed to treat with him because they will immediately recognize his authority." And so the proprietor of the vineyard sent his son. But the father was woefully disappointed, for as soon as the husbandmen saw the young man approaching, one of them said, "Look, here comes the heir of this vineyard ; what a splendid opportunity we now have to forever rid ourselves of further annoyance, and make ourselves wealthy at the same time ; let us kill him and seize on his inheritance." And they acted on this horrible suggestion, for when the son came to respectfully ask for his father's share of the fruits, they fell upon him, and with brutal force carried him beyond the walls of the vineyard and killed him.

Having related the parable, Jesus paused a moment and then asked His hearers: "When the lord of the vineyard cometh, what shall he do to those wicked husbandmen?" And some of His audience who saw the application of the parable and understood the lesson which it conveyed, answered, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen which shall render him their fruits in season."

The rabbis affected unconsciousness of the meaning of the parable, but it was only because they fully realized how strongly the lesson condemned them. They well knew that the vineyard represented God's kingdom, and that the wicked husbandmen who had killed the servants were none other than those who had slain the prophets and to whose office they (the rabbis) had succeeded. These, Jesus thus showed, entertained the same prejudices and were as virulent in their enmity to true righteousness as were the old enemies of the prophets, and that the day was near at hand when they would slay even that Son sent by the Father, just as they had killed John.

"Did you never read," asked Jesus of His imperturbable listeners, "that the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God (of which I am the corner-stone, which you have rejected), shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken ; but on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder."

This aroused the sullen spirit of the Pharisees and excited them to a new desire to destroy Jesus, but their fears of the people restrained them from offering Him violence, and they relapsed into their old scowling attitude, awaiting a favorable time to seize and execute Him.

As Jesus gave the rabbis, Pharisees and scribes to understand they would at last be brought to punishment for their resistance to God's laws, and for their prostitution of holy offices, and their murderous designs prompted by covetousness, venality and worldly ambitions, He related another parable in which this assurance was accentuated.



INTERIOR OF THE GATE OF ST. STEPHEN, JERUSALEM.—From *The Christian Herald.*

The Great Wedding Feast.

The kingdom of heaven, said Jesus, may be likened to a certain king who made a great feast in celebration of the wedding of his son. Preparations had been completed on a grand scale and a large number of invitations were sent out to people whom the king desired should rejoice with him. To his disappointment and mortification, however, when he sent his servants out to bid those whom he had invited to come to the feast, not one responded. Surprised and unable to understand why his hospitality was rejected, he told several of his other servants to go again to those that had been bidden, and to beg of them to come, for the oxen and the calves and the sheep had been killed and the feast was ready, and that the bride and groom were being kept waiting by their tardiness. But the expected guests not only treated the king's invitation with contempt, and answered scornfully, but those who had not returned to their several employments seized the servants and killed them. This outrage so angered the king that he sent his troops to execute a terrible vengeance upon those who had killed his servants.

But the king, having prepared a feast, was determined that there should not be wanting guests to enjoy it, so he sent messengers out again and bid them invite to the marriage every person whom they could find, regardless of social distinctions or conditions, whether good or bad, rich or poor, young or old. In this way the complement of guests was completed, and the king's desire fulfilled. When the feasting was ready to begin, the king entered, dressed in a royal robe, to give hearty welcome, as was the custom, to those who had gathered at his invitation. He went from one to another, saluting each in the most hospitable manner, until he came to one who had not clothed himself with a wedding robe. And he said to the man, in a tone of compassion : "Friend, why is it that you appear at the feast without the badge of invitation—a marriage robe such as I have provided for all who were bidden?" Unable to answer, because his own negligence had brought him to this sorry embarrassment, he stood speechless before his questioner. "Then said the king to his servants, Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

The parable thus given represents the invitation which God, the king, had given to the Jews, and the messengers were John and the apostles, who had been sent forth to extend an invitation to prepare for the kingdom of God. Those who had contemptuously refused the king's hospitality were those Jews who had rejected the Son and destroyed John, and who would be punished in God's own time for their crimes. The guests who were afterwards brought in from the highways, and from whatever place that they could be found, were both the Jews and Gentiles, to whom alike God extended His mercies, while the guest who was unprovided with a wedding garment represented those who affected only an outer appearance of righteousness.

CHAPTER XXX.

DISCUSSION WITH THE SADDUCEES.

WHIPPED in every debate, confounded in every question, condemned in every illustration, the three most powerful bodies of the hierarchy, the rabbis, scribes and elders, were for a while at a loss how further to proceed against Jesus, whose trenchant blade of ready answer, sublime wisdom and masterly power of prefigurement put them to confusion whenever they opened their mouths either to criticise or to question Him. Feeling their inability to cope with Him before the people, and unwilling to meet further mortification at His hands, these enemies decided to renew their efforts towards compromising Him with the Roman authorities. With this purpose the Pharisees decided to join hands with the Sadducees, and enlisting the latter, who had thus far taken no part in the Temple disputes, through them some obscure Jews were engaged to affect an air of great piety, and to go to Jesus in an outward spirit of sincere desire for instruction, with request for enlightenment upon some question of a political nature, which they hoped would elicit from Him a reply that would betray His contempt for Cæsar. They understood how yielding was the nature of Pilate, the procurator, and that the slightest word spoken in disrespect of the Emperor might be made an excuse for the arrest of Jesus by the national authorities. In pursuance of this scheme to snare Jesus, a party of Jews thus engaged came to Him and obsequiously asked, "Master, we know that Thou art true, and carest for no man, for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest rightly the way of God in truth: tell us, therefore, what thinkest Thou. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Cæsar or no? Shall we give or shall we not give?"

The delegation now before Jesus was composed of persons whom He did not know. Their professions of sincerity indicated that they were of the large mass of believers in Him, and that, foreseeing the conflict which must soon come and speedily end either in the establishment of the kingdom of God, in accordance with the expectation and traditions of the Jews, or the death of Jesus, that they really desired to know how much they owed to the authority of Cæsar. But Christ saw the craftiness of His questioners, and was ready with reply to baffle them, just as he had so many times before disconcerted the most distinguished heads of the hierarchy. Thus He answered them: "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Show Me the tribute money; bring Me a penny, that I may see

it;" and they brought unto Him a penny. And He said unto them, "Whose image and superscription is this stamped upon this coin?" They say unto Him, "It is Cæsar's." Then said He unto them, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God, the things that are God's. And they marveled at His answer, and held their peace, and left Him, and went their way."

In the reply which Jesus made He avoided any offending against the Romish spirit, and yet how thoroughly is there expressed the duty which the Jews owed to God, and inferentially His own superiority to Cæsar, to whom was due the tribute tax, which the Jews were to pay only so long as they accepted him as king, while Jesus reserved to Himself those higher dignities and rights which belong to the King of heaven.

No Marrying in Heaven.

So complete was their discomfiture that the Herodian spies and the Jewish hypocrites who thought to bring Jesus into conflict with the national authorities retired without desire to again test His wisdom and cutting sarcasm. But the Sadducees would now put their cunning against the prudence, sagacity and inspiration of Jesus. They had not met Him in discussion, and had not therefore such a measurement of His capacities as the Pharisees. They had thought over various means of annoying Jesus, and finally concluded that they could propound a question which would so embarass as to completely quiet and abash Him before the people. So, on the same day, several of the wisest or most self-conceited of the Sadducees approached Him and asked, "Master, Moses wrote unto us, if a a man die, having a wife, and without children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up seed unto his brother. Now, there were with us seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died without children, and left his wife to his brother; and the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they had no children and died. Last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

The Sadducees denied that there was any resurrection. They were in opposition to the Pharisees, who claimed to have from Moses an oral law declaring the resurrection of the body after death, and this question was so fiercely debated between the two sects that they were almost as bitter enemies as were the Jews and the Samaritans. And yet violent as their differences were, the two adopted a temporary truce in order to make a common war on Jesus, though the Sadducees did not join so vigorously in the demand for his execution. But opposing the teachings of Jesus, and especially the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, the questioners chuckled to themselves over the problem which they had propounded, and a solution of which they considered impossible.

The question was one which at any time might arise to perplex the Jews, so Jesus would not withhold an answer. Said He, "You are in error, since you do not understand the Scripture, nor the laws which Moses gave. It is true that Moses gave the law as you have stated, but your ignorance consists in limiting everything to affairs of this world. When men die, they rise again under new conditions, so that in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but become angels. Marriage is an institution of this earth, ordained by God for the prosperity of the race; but in heaven there is no such ordainment, for there all are angels in universal brotherhood and sisterhood. Persons are born and they die here; there are no births or deaths in heaven. Here there is thirst, and hunger, and physical vexations, and unsatisfied longings; but in heaven there is not. So that these differences between the material and spiritual life are such that there can be no such thing as husband and wife in heaven. But you also err in your beliefs respecting the resurrection, for Moses, whom you so highly regard as the giver of the laws which you observe, did show the resurrection of the body; for have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob?' God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him."

The answer, so explicitly spoken, even won the admiration of the scribes, who condescended to compliment Jesus, saying, "Master, Thou hast well said."

Another Attempt to Puzzle Christ.

When the Pharisees saw how Jesus had vanquished the Sadducees, they put forth a lawyer, or one of the most learned rabbis, to ask another question, an answer to which appeared to them either impossible or such as would present Him in conflict with God Himself. The lawyer therefore asked Him, "Master, which is the first commandment of all—the one great commandment of the ten given?" If God gave all of the ten commandments, how could one be greater than another? If God be perfect, so must all His laws be perfect: hence, as there can be no comparison of perfect, each law must be equally important, and none can be the greatest.

It was thus that the Pharisees argued among themselves, and the little lawyer, who was a scribe, when he stood up to put the question, must have felt several sizes larger than he really was, though in the end he no doubt felt as many sizes too large for himself. The balloon is very round when full, but when punctured it falls down very flat.

But though Jesus knew the question was put to tempt Him, with the hope of embarrassing Him, and to destroy the popularity in which He was held, He nevertheless promptly answered. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one

Lord : and thou shalt love Him with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it : Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two hang all the law and prophets." Jesus had answered this same question when the rich young man came to Him asking what he should do to be saved ; but the present reply, made to the lawyer, had a new significance, for it served to show the departure of Israel from the true worship of God. The question was certainly put to perplex, but the answer was so definite and conclusive that even the questioner himself was soulfully impressed by it, since it gave by inference this explanation of the superiority of these two over the other eight commandments : God's laws are perfect ; so is the human body perfect, every part being essential to the whole, and the adjustment of each limb and organ is so wisely made that an injury to one becomes an impairment of all. But if an arm be cut off the functions of the body may continue, though the whole organism of the man is affected by the injury, because he is not able to minister so thoroughly to the needs of the body as he was before. But if the head be cut off the man must at once perish. This illustrates how the first commandment may be regarded as the head of the whole law without any disparagement of the other commands, and in this sense the lawyer evidently understood it, for his arrogant spirit was immediately humbled and his heart seems to have been suddenly illumined by the divine sunlight of righteous understanding. Therefore he replied, "Master, Thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and none other but He ; and to love Him with all the heart, strength, mind and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves, is more than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices." He had read this declaration of the old prophet, and had possibly heard its re-enforcement by Jesus, and his conscience was thoroughly impressed by its truth. Seeing how sincere was the lawyer's faith, Jesus said to Him, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

How is Christ the Son of David.

Having answered the most perplexing questions that the Pharisees and Sadducees could put to Him, Jesus now turned inquirer by asking them, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" And they answered, "The Son of David." Jesus knew what their reply would be, and therefore understood how He might embarrass them, by showing their ignorance. In many of the old prophecies Christ was called the Son of David. It will be remembered how more than once the people when astounded by His miracles said to one another, "Is not this the Son of David?" and how the Syrophœnician woman, and the two blind beggars at Capernaum, and blind Bartimeus of Jericho called for the mercy of the Son of David, and that the people welcoming Him into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David." The belief that the Messiah

should be the Son of David sprang out of the prophecies of Isaiah (xi.) and of Jeremiah (xxiii.) and of Zechariah (vi.), and the Jews were led to look forward to the establishment of the monarchy under the leadership of this "Branch which shall grow out of the root of Jesse," by the glory foreshadowed by Isaiah in the prophecy, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth. In his day Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, 'The Lord our Righteousness!'" But the Jews failed to comprehend the spiritual nature of Christ, all their thoughts being wedded to a material king who would come of Davidic lineage, to found a kingdom in which their sensual enjoyments would find fullest gratification. To dispel the prevailing belief in a fulfillment of such earthly ambitions, and to give the Jews a knowledge of the true nature of the "Lord our Righteousness," Jesus referred His hearers to the testimony of David himself, "for David in the Book of Psalms (cx.) by the Holy Ghost, calls Him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?' David therefore himself calleth Him Lord, and how is He then his Son?" Christ is thus at once the Son of David and the Son of God in one. But how can it be?

The question which Jesus thus asked is one which not only puzzled the Pharisees, who confessed their ignorance by making no reply, but one which the most learned of men have been unable to answer. It has continued and will ever remain the great insolvable problem of the ages, a mystery which belongs to the Deity, to be unfolded only in the great future. By human reasoning, we can only adopt a half-satisfying explanation by accepting Christ in a dual nature as the Son of David by earthly lineage, and as the Son of God by His spiritual generation.

A Scathing Anathema.

Jesus had stood on the defensive, but He had so effectually repulsed His enemies at every point of attack that He felt the occasion was now presented for a more vigorous arraignment of His adversaries whom He would expose before the people for their irreligion and immoralities practiced under the mask of priestly duties. He knew that the time of His offering-up drew near, and He would now hasten an end to the conflict. But we stand in wondering amazement at the fearless attitude He occupies before the powerful men of the nation, and lift our minds from consideration of Him as a man, to the contemplation of Him as a God. While "the people heard Him gladly," His friends were not those having power to defend Him against the tides of bitter rancor and murderous persecution that were rolling towards Him, receding a little way from time to time, but only to gain greater impetuosity and to the more certainly engulf Him. He saw the

waves of tumult, He noted their foamy crests, He felt the spray dashing in His face, but He stood immovable on the shore of mercy, forgiveness and loyalty to God, and defied the mad breakers of iniquity. We see Him as a pale Nazarene, conscious of the tragic fate that would terminate His ministry three days later, standing alone before the great rulers, the learned men of the nation, the powerful chiefs of the hierarchy, a sea of faces is before Him, in which He observes images of hate, of contumely, of rage, of murder; enemies everywhere, not only about the sacred altar, and crowding the sanctuary, and filling the halls of council, but also in the palace, among the soldiery and in the governor's chamber. And yet amid all these threatening surroundings Jesus is of all that audience the least excited, the most resolute, and the fiery accuser. It was His last appearance as a teacher, in the Temple, and a better sermon He never preached. He would denounce the scribes and rabbis to the people to emancipate them from the cruel thraldom under which they suffered, therefore spake Jesus somewhat in this wise: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Your priests preach that which they fail to practice. They lay upon you the burdens of senseless proscriptions and bind you to meaningless ceremonies, and exact of you large payments which they use for their sensual enjoyments, nor do they observe the oppressive rituals which they order you to obey. Whatever they do of a pious nature is done publicly that they may obtain your praises, and to deceive you by exciting your belief in their righteousness. Beware of the scribes who make their phylacteries broad, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and walk in long robes, and who crowd in and occupy the seats of honor at the feasts and in synagogues, and who expect to be called Master. All these they do manifesting their delight in their pre-eminence above you, as lords do in the subjection of their slaves. This I tell you is putting religion on dress-parade, and they make of themselves drum-majors in the procession. But you should call no man rabbi, for only one is your Master, and I am He. And call no man father on earth, for only one is your Father, which is in heaven. For I tell you that he who is greatest among you now shall become your servant."

Having addressed His disciples and those who were His friends, Jesus turned directly to His enemies and bombarded them with bitter denunciation for their iniquities, and a profanation of the service for which the priesthood had been established, and of the Temple which they had turned into a house of riot, oppression and gain. Said He, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." And with equally bitter condemnings He accused them of devouring the substance of widows, under the guise of extreme sanctity and sacred guardianship, and of all manner of selfish ambitions, such as pride, and covetousness, and self-conceit, and of desiring



MODERN EASTER PILGRIMAGE TO BETHLEHEM.—From *The Christian Herald.*

applause from their deceived followers ; and of exacting tithes to support them in evil ways, and of showing signs of extreme piety, but only to mask the deformity of their hearts which were overflowing with extortion, rapacity, ungodliness and excess of every kind. "Woe unto you," said He, "for you are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes ; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city ; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."

Murder of the Apostles.

How soon came to pass a verification of this terrible prophecy :

St. Stephen, stoned to death outside the walls of Jerusalem, having thus the honor of being the first Christian martyr.

St. Peter, crucified head downward in Rome.

St. Thomas, killed by a lance-thrust while preaching.

St. Matthew, burned alive in Arabia Felix.

St. Mark, killed in his church in Alexandria.

St. Matthias, chosen to fill the place of Judas, killed in Ethiopia.

St. Andrew, crucified at Patrea, in Achaia.

St. Bartholomew, roasted and then flayed alive at Albanopolis.

St. John, banished to Patmos.

And if we had the full history of the apostles we would no doubt know that at least ten of them became martyrs to the faith, and love and loyalty which they manifested for their Lord.

No wonder that Jesus, foreseeing these things, should break forth in lamentation, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE POOR WOMAN'S MITE.

AFTER delivering His withering denunciation against the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus left the Outer Court and passed into the Court of the Women, where stood thirteen chests arranged along one side, in which the Jews deposited, as freewill offerings, whatever contributions their ability or generosity prompted. There was a stream of people passing along through this court, which was also called the treasury, and here Jesus took a seat beside one of the pillars, evidently with the purpose of watching with what spirit contributions to the support of the poor and the Temple priests were being made. He noticed that the arrogant, self-important and self-righteous air which distinguished the Pharisees when they went up to pray was not lacking here, for as the rich approached the chests it was with great pomposity and effort to attract attention to the liberality of their offerings. Presently, however, Jesus descries a woman, dressed in the garb of widowhood, timidly advancing, and having every appearance of poverty. He watches her, because she exhibits so much humbleness, and so much shyness, and so much desire to avoid notice. What can be the cause of her embarrassment, her hesitation, her uncertainty, which seem to justify suspicion as to the purpose which brought her into the treasury court? Has she committed, or does she contemplate a crime? The eye of Jesus is upon her, watching every faltering step, until in a moment when the woman thinks no one will observe her she deposits in one of the chests her voluntary offering of two mites, a coin so small that it took two of them to make a farthing, and then turning quickly she walks away lest some one might know how beggarly was the contribution which she has made.

Jesus spake no word to the woman, but He called His disciples and said, "You see that poor widow woman, who is just now on her way to the Outer Court? Well, she is worthy of all honor. I noticed how a moment ago she came in the rear of the procession of rich Jews, and marked how they made their offerings. One had a pocket full of money and he threw in a dollar; another, whom I knew to be rich and able to give a very large sum, came flaunting his splendid robes and jewelry, and dropped in one small piece of silver, so that it would make a noise when falling; another gave a dime with an air of importance that would not become a man who gave a hundred times as much. But that poor woman cast in freely every cent that she had, and showed a pang of deep regret

because she could not give more. She had only two mites, but it was all she had, and thus I say she gave more than all the rest. They gave to gain credit of men ; they begrudged the offering even ; but that poor woman made her gift out of a devout spirit, and happily denied herself things which were greatly needed, in order that she might fulfill in the largest measure her obligation to God."

Certain of the Greeks Desire Audience with Him.

As Jesus ceased talking to those disciples who had come at His call to hear the lesson on the generous and righteous spirit which the poor woman had exhibited, two others of His disciples, Philip and Andrew, came to tell Him that some Greeks desired to see Him. It must not be supposed that all who attended the Passover were Jews, for the teachings of Jesus and John had already spread among the Gentiles in the Holy Land, and some of these who had renounced their nationality to embrace Judaism were in a condition of semi-conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. They had seen some of His miracles and had proofs of many others, so that their curiosity to know more of Him was a creditable ambition. These Gentiles were Greeks who lived in Galilee and from the manner in which they were introduced to Jesus we must believe that they were acquaintances of Philip. They had certainly nearly outgrown the crude religion of the Hellenes, whose gods peopled the air and the earth alike, but they had no conception of how an incarnate God could redeem the world through His death.

Jesus gladly accorded the Greeks, who thus sought Him, an interview, apparently regarding them as the nucleus around which would gather those seeking a higher conception of the Deity than was offered by Hellenistic beliefs, and which would spread until the gospel of the true faith should be embraced by all the Gentile nations of the world. When, therefore, Jesus met the Greeks, knowing their desire, He said, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." This declaration He followed by an explanation of how His suffering and death should save the world. Said He, "Verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In other words, seed will not produce unless it be planted ; in planting, the grain dies, but the seed-germ blossoms forth into new life and produces a hundred-fold. Grains of wheat have been found in the necropoli of the Egyptians, where they had remained in mummy cases of the dead for thousands of years suffering no destruction of their germs, and when planted they have brought forth curious-looking, but splendid wheat, like that which the Israelites harvested in the time of the Pharaohs. Therefore, the illustration which Christ gave was to show that death to the grain meant productive life to the plant which succeeded, so His death was that seed which would bring forth the fruit of redemption in the harvest of spiritual life.



THE WIDOW'S MITE.—Drawn by Doré.

The dual nature of Jesus made Him alike the subject of spiritual and natural laws. Had He come only preaching the gospel and making no sacrifices of His life, He would have been likened unto the wheat which lay for ages in the mummy cases of the Egyptians; the germ would have lived, but it would never have brought forth spiritual fruits. Hence, His subjection to natural laws and human conditions made it necessary for Him to suffer and to die in order that from His death might spring up the harvest of the resurrection. So likewise must death come to all, that being like a seed planted in corruption we spring forth anew in incorruption. Therefore, thus spoke Jesus: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." At this moment a sudden change came over our Lord; His eyes closed as if in deep reflection, a pallor spread over His illustrious features; His breath grew fitful, and the heaving of His bosom showed that some terrible mental trouble had assailed Him. A cloud had enveloped His pure soul out of which it struggled to escape, but a vision of martyrdom was before Him, and the tragic sacrifice which He was to suffer hung upon Him in a great and terrible pall. His lips now moved and in agony He spoke, "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name."

But in this hour of trouble, when the cross was before Him in prefigurement of the horrible death which He was so soon to suffer, and when an ocean of agony seemed rolling over Him with dark and beating waves, His sinking spirit was revived by a voice that came like a pæan out of the sky, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Once before this voice of God came down in benediction upon Him at His baptizing, and again on the Mount of Transfiguration, and a third time it spoke, not only to His oppressed spirit, but as a testimony to His Sonship of God to an assemblage in the Temple.

The voice ceased, the vision of torture faded, the spirit of consolation had settled its wings upon the soul of Jesus, and He resumed His discourse to the people about Him. Some had said the voice was inarticulate, others that it thundered, while others declared that it was an angel speaking in some unknown tongue, but Christ stilled their disputes by assuring them that it was indeed a voice from heaven given as a testimony of His Messiahship, as some who were given the power to understand knew it to be. "Now," said Jesus, "is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up (crucified, as I must soon be), will draw all men unto Me; for the time approaches when men will understand, and will perceive that My death was the seed of their salvation." Then some asked Him: "We have heard out



AN ORIENTAL MARKET SCENE.—From *The Christian Herald.*

of the law that Christ abideth forever ; and how sayest Thou then that the Son of Man must be lifted up [crucified] ? Who is this Son of Man ? '' But Jesus did not choose to answer them directly ; they would soon be able to know what He meant, the fulfillment of His words was almost at hand. The day was dying and the night of death was stealing down to cover the world with sorrow, and Christ said, '' Yet a little while is the light of My presence with you. Walk while you have this light, lest darkness overtake you. While ye have the light, believe in the light ; that ye may be children of the light.''

Prophecies Uttered on Olivet.

The day, Tuesday, had been a most eventful one, in which Jesus had vanquished His enemies at every point of conflict, and during which He had given many incomparable lessons condemning the scribes and Pharisees. It was now far in the afternoon and Jesus prepares to leave the Temple, whose interior He would never again behold, and to which He would not again bend His steps as an instructor of His people. Slowly He leaves the sacred edifice, followed by His disciples, His heart burdened with sad reflections on the departed glory of the ancient house of Israel, in which the hopes of the nation had so long centered, the dedication of its sanctuaries to God, and how now it was profaned by impious uses of a worldly priesthood. And thus together they pass out of the gate leading to Bethany, down through the valley of Jehoshaphat, over the Kedron and on to Olivet, upon the apex of which Jesus and the Twelve sit down to look again upon the splendors of Jerusalem, crowned as they are by the grandeur and magnificence of the Temple, sparkling in the sunlight like a city of pearls and diamonds, and amethysts and beryls in the splendor of dazzling combination.

While sitting on the Mount, one of the disciples, remembering how Christ had wept over Jerusalem and foreshadowed the Temple's destruction, said to Him, '' Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here ! '' Such a structure, with its immense masonry, with its stones of astounding size, some of them being as much as forty feet long, twelve feet thick and eighteen feet broad, seemed to be able to defy time itself, so that the disciple was anxious to know how these would be destroyed. And Jesus answered him, '' See ye not all these things ? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.''

Then asked Peter, James, John and Andrew, in all of whom surprise became at once overmastering, '' Tell us, when shall these things be ? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the world ? '' What a momentous question was this to the disciples who had begun to comprehend the spiritual nature of Christ and who possibly were thinking that the end of the world was now not far away.

Jesus answered them very much as He had once before, for said He: "Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in My name, saying, 'I am Christ,' and shall deceive many." This forewarning He had given them on a previous occasion, but it was proper to repeat it because, as His disciples were to become missionaries to spread the gospel, it was important to impress upon them some of the difficulties which they would have to encounter. But He did not regard it as advisable to inform them positively when the events which He predicted would be fulfilled, preferring to give a warning that would cause them to constantly watch and pray and to fulfill all righteousness.

Continuing His prophecy, Jesus said, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." No, not yet, for there shall rise nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, despite peace congresses and boards of arbitration, and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes despite our transportation facilities, and our quarantines, and our signal service. Christ foresaw all these just as He foresaw what civilization of the nineteenth century would be, and He said all these are but the beginning of sorrows. Then looking again into the future and taking in at one glance all the persecutions to which His followers would be subjected, the burnings, and crucifixions, and tormenting with steel and claw and screw and rack and dungeon, and fangs of half-famished beasts, He told them, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted [tormented], and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another and shall hate one another." How often already has this prediction been fulfilled? Ask the spirits of the persecuted Protestants and of the persecuted Catholics. First, heathen against Christian, and then Christian against Christian. It is a horrible remembrance, and as truthfully pictured by Jesus as it is recorded in history.

"And many false prophets shall rise and deceive many." Scarcely a year passes that we do not learn of the sudden appearance of one of these, and though other continents have been afflicted with a great number, America, for a young country, has supplied more than her quota. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Judgment to Swoop Down Upon Jerusalem.

All these are judgments which were, and some of which are yet to come upon all nations; but there were other judgments to be visited upon Jerusalem, and upon all Judah, the worst of which, let us believe, have already been fulfilled. Continuing therefore, He spake, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by David, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him

understand). When armies shall encompass Jerusalem, then let that be a warning to flee into the mountains.'' How fortunate would it have been had the people followed this advice, when Titus encompassed the walls of that city at the time of the Passover, and when Gallus surprised and invested it during the feast of Tabernacles and killed a million people.

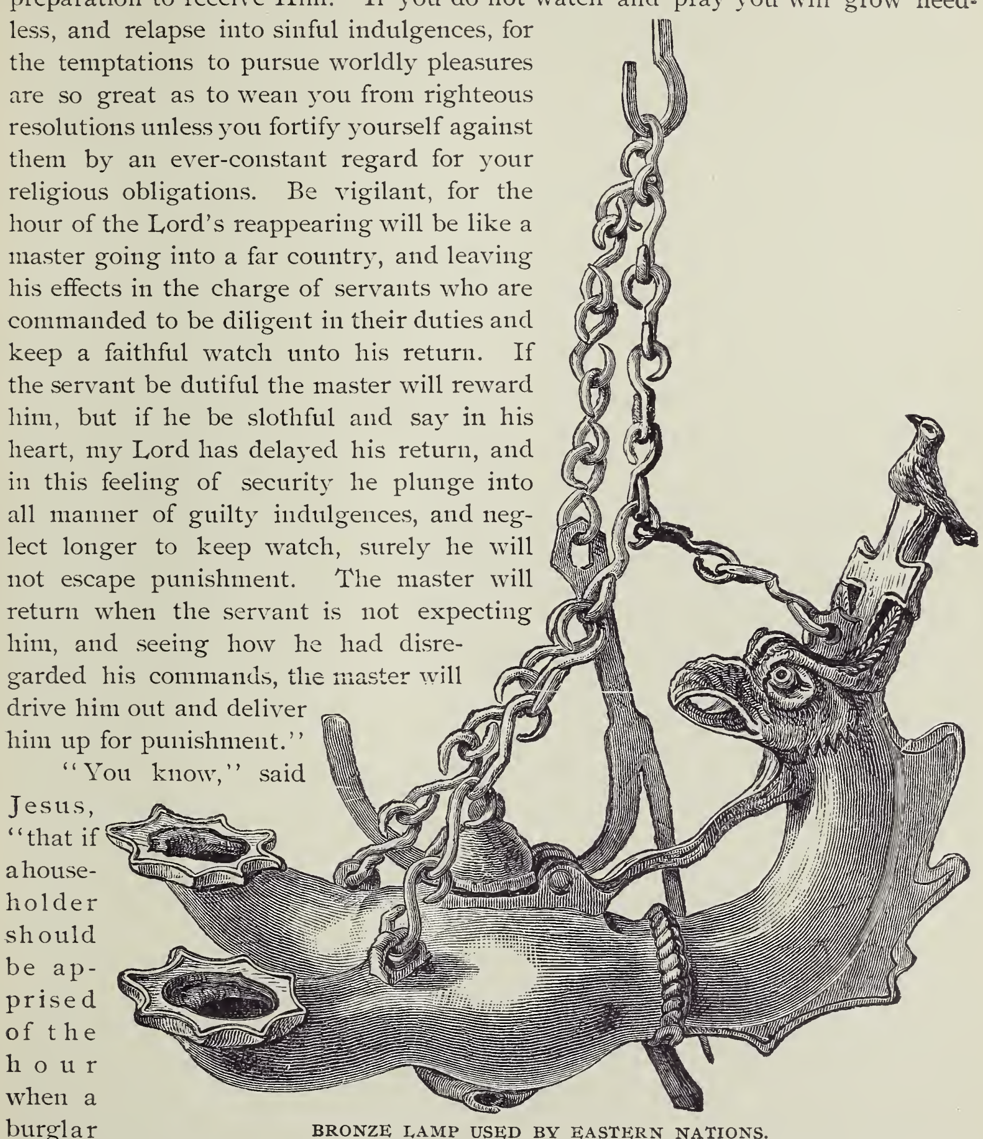
''Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'' This should be the sign of the Lord's second coming. No description can ever surpass this, no words of poet, philosopher or rhetorician can ever equal these which fell from the Master's lips. So thrilling that the heart is shaken by the reading, so picturesque that the whole prophecy presents itself like a terrible picture before our horrified vision : as we look on at the shadow cast by an obscured sun, and see the sooty moon riding on wing of storm, and stars leaping out of heaven like serpents of fire, and mountains toppling, and cities tumbling, we are fairly cast down with terror. But our eyes then turn to the background of this picture, and we see a rising light flooding the distracted earth, scattering cloud and falling star. Behold now how the dark clouds are gilded, and how they grow into gigantic pearls with rainbow above and aurora borealis below and flame of glory in the centre. The magnificence of the scene grows into sublimity of lustre as we observe Jesus riding on chariot of cloud with all the sumptuousness of heaven about Him, and bands of angels preceding in phalanx of iridescent wing and radiant face, and trailing robes of gossamer. Why, so faithful is the picture that we can almost hear the trumpet blast calling together all the Christians of the world, those to whom reward shall be given, and can see that as God combs the long black tresses of the storm with lightning and then adorns them with ribbon of rainbow, so has He lent to the picture of a tottering world the refulgence and bewildering splendor and dazzling glory of Jesus coming to save those who are prepared to give Him welcome.

Prepare for the Lord's Coming.

Jesus declared to His disciples that many signs would be given even during that generation, but that the hour of the day of His coming no man knew, not even the angels in heaven, the time being concealed from all save from God Himself. ''Watch, therefore,'' said He, ''for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But do not be as were the people in the time of Noah ; let it be sufficient for you

to have revealment of the fact that the Lord shall come, and use all your time in preparation to receive Him. If you do not watch and pray you will grow heedless, and relapse into sinful indulgences, for the temptations to pursue worldly pleasures are so great as to wean you from righteous resolutions unless you fortify yourself against them by an ever-constant regard for your religious obligations. Be vigilant, for the hour of the Lord's reappearing will be like a master going into a far country, and leaving his effects in the charge of servants who are commanded to be diligent in their duties and keep a faithful watch unto his return. If the servant be dutiful the master will reward him, but if he be slothful and say in his heart, my Lord has delayed his return, and in this feeling of security he plunge into all manner of guilty indulgences, and neglect longer to keep watch, surely he will not escape punishment. The master will return when the servant is not expecting him, and seeing how he had disregarded his commands, the master will drive him out and deliver him up for punishment."

"You know," said Jesus, "that if a householder should be apprised of the hour when a burglar would come to rob him, he would watch to prevent his house being plundered. But as a thief comes in his own secret time so will the return of the Son of Man be similarly sudden and unexpected."



BRONZE LAMP USED BY EASTERN NATIONS.

Parable of the Ten Virgins.

The coming of the Lord for judgment was illustrated by Jesus by a parable of ten virgins, who had been invited to participate in a marriage procession. It was customary with the Jews in the higher circles to make a festival of marriage, among other practices being that of going out in a procession to meet the groom, the celebrants first providing themselves with musical instruments and with lamps and torches, to receive and conduct him to the bride's home, where the marriage ceremony was performed and a great feast given. In the parable related by Jesus of ten virgins who went out to welcome the bridegroom, five were wise in that they took lamps filled with oil and also carried an additional supply in their oil cases to provide for refilling their lamps if they should burn out during the time of waiting. The other five, being foolish, did not make such provision, being heedless of consequences, since they reckoned upon a quick appearance of the groom. So the ten went out in the evening to a house by which the groom must pass and there waited his approach ; but hour after hour went by with no signs of his coming and the long delay serving to make their eyes heavy with slumber they all finally lay down and slept. At midnight the sound of music and of singing aroused other people in the house, who, rushing out, saw a procession advancing, headed by torches, and girls in white singing, and they called out to the sleeping virgins, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh : go ye out to meet him." Then there was a hasty scrambling to make ready, but when the five improvident virgins trimmed their lamps they discovered that the oil had burned out, so they begged of the others to give them a supply ; but the wise answered, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you : but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." They now realized how neglectful they had been, and rushed off in great haste to a neighboring oil merchant, hoping yet to have their lamps refilled before the groom should reach the bride's house. But while they were gone the bridegroom came and the five wise virgins joined the procession and went on with it to the bride's house, where they were joyfully received, and the door being soon shut the festivities and feasting began.

After a while the five foolish virgins came with their burning lamps and sought admission to the house of celebration, but to their knockings and their suppliant cries of "Lord, Lord, open to us," they received only the chilling reply, "I know you not."

See that you be not neglectful like the five foolish virgins, but be prepared against the time when the bridegroom from heaven shall appear, coming in glory to spread a banquet in celebration of His wedding with those who have been faithful to Him through night of temptation and through day of promise.

Jesus having given to His disciples the parable of the ten virgins, then repeated that of the talents, practically as He related it in Jericho, giving to it



THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.—Drawn by Bida. (463)

however a re-enforcement by way of deeper impressment upon the minds of His twelve auditors, showing how they should not only prove faithful in maintaining towards God a worshipful feeling, but that it was obligatory upon them to exercise whatever abilities with which they were endowed towards advancing the kingdom of the Gospel, for their reward would be in proportion to the service they rendered in spreading the gospel and bringing souls to repentance. And Jesus also gave His disciples an illustration of the Judgment which was to be sent on the nations, saying, "And before Him shall be gathered all nations ; and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." To the sheep, who know Him as their shepherd, and who obey His voice, rewards of salvation and blessedness shall be given ; but the goats on the left, signifying the hypocrites, the Pharisees, and those so worldly-minded as to have given themselves to sinful indulgences, will be cast into outer darkness—the one to a blissful life that shall be unending : the other to punishment that shall be like everlasting.



CHAPTER XXXII.

PERFUME FOR CHRIST.

WHEN Jesus ended His discourse to the disciples, the sun had sunk far down the hills on the west of Jerusalem, admonishing them that if they would reach Bethany before nightfall, the journey must be continued at once. Though the distance is brief, the way is dreadfully rough, as I know by experience ; but to travel it after dark is really dangerous, so rock-bestrewn is the road. As they walked along towards Bethany, Jesus appeared to be pondering over the sacrifice which He was to make three days later, and on the inconceivable imperviousness of the hearts of the Jews to His teachings. Arousing from His gloomy reverie, He said to the Twelve, "You know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified." Then He relapsed into a reflective mood, making no further observation, while the disciples held their peace, failing to understand His words, or else unable to bring their minds to a realization of the dread event predicted. But these words of Christ had another significance, for manifestly they were inspired by His supernatural knowledge that at that very moment there was an assembling of the chief priests, scribes and elders in the palace of Caiaphas for the purpose of concerting means to destroy Him. This meeting was not an harmonious one, for some of the more rash and excitable attendants proposed that they arrest Jesus on the feast day, which proposition met with violent opposition from the more conservative priests, who, understanding the temper of the people, declared that any effort to take Him on that day would be followed by an uprising which might result in a mob destroying every member of the Sanhedrim.

But Jesus went on, conscious though He was of what was transpiring in the house of the high-priest, nor had He occasion to turn aside, knowing how and when the end would come. So with His disciples He went to the house of His dearest friends in Bethany, probably to be entertained by them for the night, and spend His last day in the little village, talking with them on the surprising events of his ministry, and possibly now telling them how He would be crucified before three days more were ended. If He lodged Tuesday night with Lazarus, Mary and Martha and Simon, on the following day He received an invitation from another Simon—who was distinguished as the "red leper"—to dine with him. Simon was a very common name among the Jews, and the surnames were only

given in case where the person had some particular calling by which he might be designated, it is impossible for us now to tell what particular Simon this was who invited Jesus to dine with him. By the designation of "Simon, the leper," we are given to understand that he had been for a long while a sufferer from that fatal and loathsome disease, and by his invitation to Jesus we gain the belief that at some time before, probably at a previous visit to Bethany, Jesus had healed him. Otherwise we cannot comprehend the significance of the dinner that was thus given, nor can we possibly believe that Jesus would accept the hospitality of a leper when by word or touch He could heal him.

It is altogether probable that Simon had been cured of his leprosy by Jesus, and that being a wealthy man he desired to give some manifestation of his gratitude, which he accomplished by giving a feast to his restorer. The particular incident which occurred at this dinner, and which served to make it the most important, because the most celebrated meal that Christ ever ate, is thus described by Mark:

"And being in Bethany, in the house of 'Simon the leper,' as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box and poured it on His head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?"

By this account of an incident, simple in itself but profound in its significance, we are introduced to a man pale and wasted with recent sickness, who is entertaining the Doctor who cured him. Simon the host, Christ the guest. It is unpleasant to be interrupted at meals, and considerable indignation is aroused by the fact that a woman presses into the dining hall with ointment made of spikes of nard, and pours this ointment on the head of Christ. It was an ointment so costly and so rare that the bestowment of it implied great admiration and affection. "Put her out!" cried the people; "What an outrageous interruption this is! Why is this woman allowed to come in here?" Besides that, it is such a lack of economy. Here she takes a stone jar made from the mountains near the city of Alabastron—a stone jar filled with perfume so costly that it might have purchased bread for the poor, and pours it on the head of one who cares nothing for the fragrance. "Stop," said Jesus, "do not put her out!" He who had mingled the cup of all the flowers appreciated the breath of the nard, and he who had made the stone jars in the factories of Alabastron knew the worth of that box. Jesus says: "The woman is right. She has done her best, and the perfume which fills this banqueting house shall yet fill all the earth and all ages."

That woman could have bought a vase that would not have cost so much as one made of alabaster. She might have brought perfume that would have cost only fifty pence; this cost three hundred. As far as I can understand, her whole

fortune was in it. She might have been more economical; but no, she gets the very best box, and puts in it the very best perfume, and pours it all out on the head of her Redeemer. She brings the perfumes of nard, the most expensive essence known to the Jews, extracted as it was from one of the rarest and most fragrant of flowers. And what type of gracious love was this offering: sweet flowers, crushed in the press, submerged in the bowl until their spirits came forth in gracious distillment, and the soul of the flowers became the perfume of the alabastron jar for Christ's anointment.

While I sit this December morning in Bethany and look out upon the hillsides of the Holy Land, this beautiful offering of Mary comes to me in irresistible meaning of exquisite symbolism and incomparable beauty.

The flowers of the field are all dead as I write. I saw them blooming in the valleys and mountains; they ran up to the very lips of the cave; they garlanded the neck of the hills like a May queen. They set their banquet of golden cups for the bee, and dripped in drops of honeysuckle for the humming-bird. They dashed their antlers against the white hand of the sick child, and came to the nostrils of the dying like spice gales from heaven. They shook in the agitation of the bride, and at the burial hour rang the silver chime of a resurrection. Beautiful flowers! Bright flowers! Sweet flowers! But they are all dead now. I saw their scattered petals on the foam of the wild brook, and I pulled aside the hedge and saw the place where their corpses lay. But their spirits are ever with us, as are the spirits of Jesus and of Mary who anointed Him, and of the immortal hosts who approved that precious offering.



SPIKENARD.

Our world will after a while burn up. So great have been its abominations and disorders, that one would think that when the flames touch it a horrible stench would roll into the skies; the coal-mines consuming, the impurities of

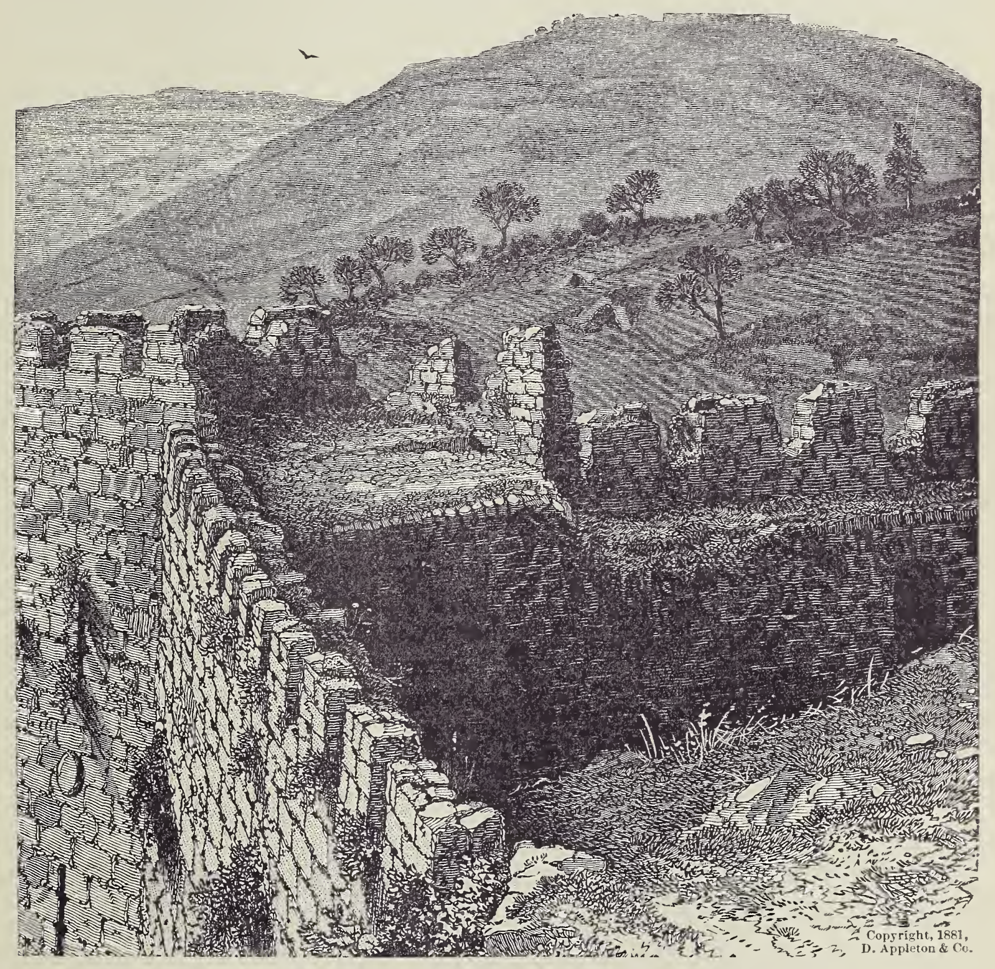
great cities burning, you might think that a lost spirit from the pit would stagger back at the sickening odor. But no. I suppose on that day a cloud of incense will roll into the skies, all the wilderness of tropical flowers on fire, the mountains of frankincense, the white sheet of the water-lilies, the million tufts of heliotrope, the trellises of honeysuckle, the walls of "morning-glory." The earth shall be a burning censer held up before the throne of God, with all the sweet odors of the hemispheres. But on that day a sweeter gale shall waft into the skies. It will come up from ages past, from altars of devotion, and hovels of poverty, and beds of pain, and stakes of martyrdom, and from all the places whose good men and women have suffered for God and died for the truth. It will be the fragrance ot ten thousand boxes of alabaster, which, through the long reach of the ages, were poured on the head of Christ. That woman brought an alabaster-box. What was it to Jesus? Why, he owns all the fragrance of earth and heaven; but He took it. He was satisfied with it. If it had been a wooden box, He would have been just as well satisfied. I hear some say, "If I only had this, that or the other thing, I would do so much for God." In the last day it may be found that a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple gets as rich a reward as the founding of a kingdom, and that the sewing-girl's needle may be as honorable in God's sight as a king's sceptre, and that the grandest eulogium that was ever uttered about any one was, "She hath done what she could."

"She is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

The Scheme of Betrayal.

Judas being treasurer of the twelve apostles, was specially offended at the extravagance of Mary in using such costly ointment for the anointing of Jesus, and even expressed his indignation, which the kind words and sad predictions of Jesus failed to assuage. From that moment, but whether from revengeful design or sincere desire for the manifestation of the power which he knew his Lord possessed we know not, Judas became an antagonist of Christ. He understood where the enemies of Jesus might be found, and taking leave of his brethren with some excuse, he repaired to the house of Caiaphas on the Mount of Offence, just outside of Jerusalem, and finding there an assemblage of priests and scribes, he boldly announced the purpose of his visit. Said he, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And when they heard it they were glad, and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And Judas promised, and from that time he sought opportunity how he might conveniently betray Him unto them in the absence of the multitude."

At this point we are confronted by one of the greatest problems that has ever given rise to disputation. It is a question which affords unlimited testimony for argument, and one which neither time nor discussion will ever settle. The apostles, writing of the betrayal, attribute the treason of Judas to Satanic



THE HILL OF EVIL COUNSEL, FROM THE SOUTH WALL, JERUSALEM.

influence, and there is not wanting evidence from Christ Himself that the ruling passion of Judas was avarice, which led him to commit such acts as would appear to impugn his honesty. But again we may ask if the betrayal was not in pursuance of divine purpose? Jesus was born to become a sacrifice for the world ; and though, in a sense, limited to natural laws, He was yet, in a broader

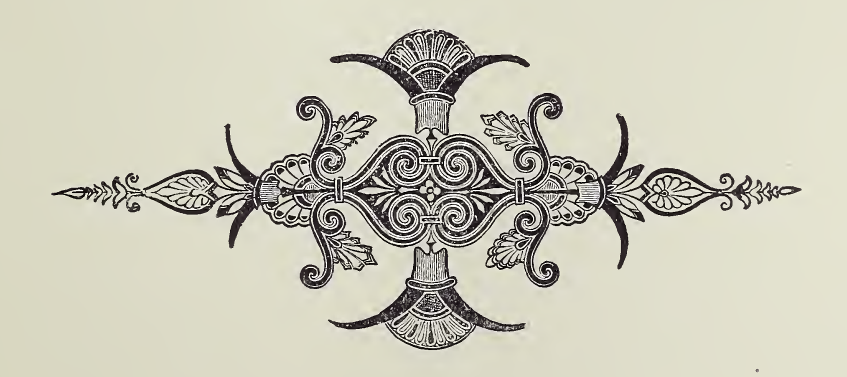
interpretation, a God sent among men and knowing no limitations. The selection of Judas as a disciple was certainly not with the belief that he would fulfill all the conditions of true apostleship, for otherwise we must doubt the prescience of Jesus, unless we regard the appointment as an instrumentality to fulfill the essential purpose of Christ's coming. Again, we must consider the position which Judas occupied among the Twelve. He was never a confidant of Jesus, like John and Peter, or James and Andrew. But other apostles had no more intimate relation, and hence we cannot for this reason assume that Jesus regarded him with distrust. On the other hand, the selection of Judas as treasurer of the Twelve, and possibly of the seventy, and of all of Christ's followers, indicates reliance in his integrity, for the position gave unbridled opportunity for dishonesty. To him the collections made were given, and by him were disbursed for the immediate needs of the apostles and for charity, without his being required to render any accounting.

It is maintained with much show of reason that Judas had become alienated from Christ by reason of his knowledge that Jesus read his heart and saw how covetous and unprincipled he really was; that Judas had accepted apostleship for ambitious ends; that he believed in the miracles of Jesus and confidently looked forward to the establishment of the Jewish Monarchy, to the throne of which Jesus would come as the rightful heir of David. He accordingly aspired to some high office within the gift of his Master. When, however, he awakened from this ambitious dream and comprehended the spiritual kingdom which Christ had come to establish, Judas lost courage, faith and aspiration; and when he saw with what impunity Jesus was reviled, and how strong was the party that had resolved upon His execution, the last tie that bound him to Jesus was soon broken. Henceforth, to escape the persecutions threatened against the followers of Christ, he would not only abandon Him, but join His enemies, thereby reaping the double advantage of securing his own safety and of gaining a reward for betraying Jesus.

This argument is a strong one, but it is met with one equally masterful; Judas must have been convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus by the miracles which he witnessed; if he had this conviction, he understood that Jesus had unlimited mastership of the world, which it were madness for human power to oppose. If Judas believed in the predictions of Jesus, and he had seen not a few verified, he must have regarded with terror the punishment which Christ declared would come to those who rejected Him; hence he could hardly have so debased himself to escape the possible persecutions of scribes and Pharisees, for no persecutions had yet even threatened them, and were prospective only in the predictions made by Jesus. Again, we note that Judas was, as tradition tells us, the wealthiest of the Twelve. The apostles were supposed to contribute their

possessions to a common fund for the equal advantage of all, but in fact they did not do this, for we do not learn of Nathanael selling his house, or of John, James and Andrew selling their boats and their nets and turning the proceeds into the common fund. They merely left all and followed Jesus. The price of betrayal was about $22.00, a sum so insignificant that we can hardly believe he would commit such a monstrous and treasonable act for the reward alone. Those who argue thus maintain that the real motive of Judas was to compel Jesus to assert His kingly prerogatives, and in so doing to exercise His supernatural powers to bring not only the Jews but all the world to acknowledge Him as king. By this decisive step Judas hoped to succeed with Jesus to the proud eminence of earthly aggrandizement which his ambitions had so gloriously pictured to him, and to reap both worldly and heavenly reward for thus precipitating the accomplishment of what he conceived to be the prime design of Christ.

The force of this argument is especially great when we consider the overwhelming remorse which led Judas to surrender the price of betrayal, and after vainly trying to establish the innocence of Jesus before His murderous enemies, to punish his own apparent perfidy by suicide. To exhaust the arguments introduced by disputants on both sides of this controversy would require a large volume of itself, but as conclusion is impossible, however exhaustive the discussion, each person must be left to form his own opinions as to the real motive which actuated Judas. But all will agree that the betrayal of Christ did not bring about, and could hardly have hastened, His crucifixion, since for that purpose came He into the world.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.

PROBABLY Jesus dined with Simon on Wednesday, and on the evening of that day Judas made his compact with the Sanhedrim to betray Him. On Thursday, as the records seem to show, the disciples came to Jesus asking Him where they should prepare the Passover feast. What date this offering and supper was made we have no means for accurately determining. The feast was instituted by Moses as described in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. He fixed the fourteenth of Abib, the first month of the ecclesiastical calendar, as the date when the feast should be made, at which time every Jew not suffering from bodily infirmity, or ceremonial impurity, was compelled to present himself at the sanctuary and there make offerings according to his ability. On the succeeding evening the lambs appointed for the sacrifice were slain, and the fat and blood given to the priests, who burned the fat and sprinkled the altar with the blood. The other portions were roasted and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. After the night was ended a great convocation was held, and then for six successive days offerings of two young bullocks were made in addition to other sacrifices—seven lambs, one year old, for meat and burnt offering—during which time abstinence from all but absolutely necessary labor was enjoined. On the twenty-first another holy convocation was held, and the day was devoted to peculiar solemnities. These ceremonies were not always the same, an interruption having occurred by reason of the destruction of the Temple, and upon their reinstitution there was a greater liberty of license, which finally grew into lawfulness of the celebration of the festival outside of the sanctuaries. If it were possible for us to tell the exact date of the feast, we would be able to determine the day of the month on which Christ was crucified; but in the absence of this knowledge, as more fully explained in a previous chapter, our histories of the crucifixion give each a different date, thus exhibiting the hopeless confusion into which each one attempting to compute the time has been led.

The Lord's Last Supper.

The passover which Jesus was now about to celebrate was a prophetic type of his own sacrifice. As the blood of a lamb was sprinkled upon the door-posts of the houses of the Israelites in Egypt to avert the destroying angel, so was the blood of Jesus now to be poured out as a sin-offering to save mankind from the doom that impended, hence "Christ our Passover is sacrified for us."



JESUS AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.—Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

When the disciples asked, "Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare, that Thou mayest eat the Passover," Jesus seems to have suddenly seen the importance of hastening the preparation, for He immediately instructed Peter and John to go into Jerusalem, where they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water, whom they were to follow until he entered his house. Greeting him therefore at his home, the two disciples were told to say to him, "The Master saith unto thee, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples. Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples? Then will the man show you a large upper room furnished and prepared. There make ready for us." John and Peter did as the Lord had bidden them, finding everything as Jesus had foretold, and at the house designated they prepared for the feast.

When the afternoon was far advanced, Jesus and His disciples repaired to the place provided, and entering the guest-chamber they found everything prepared and they sat down to celebrate the most solemn occasion that had ever transpired in the life of any one of the participants; an occasion so sad that its solemnity has lost none of its impressiveness in the more than eighteen hundred years that have since elapsed. Jesus was the King of Mercy sitting on the throne of gloom, and with heaving bosom from the oppression which a knowledge of His fate produced, He said to His disciples, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then lifting up the cup filled with wine, He gave thanks and passed it to the disciple who sat next to Him on the right, saying, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come." The significance of this act is in that He would not participate in any cheer to divert His thoughts from the offering which He was soon to make; that a more royal banquet was prepared and awaiting Him in His Father's Mansion, whither He would go to celebrate the emancipation from the sins of this world of all who loved Him.

It would seem impossible that His disciples could disturb the holy solemnity of that sacred hour by unseemly wranglings concerning who should be greatest in that kingdom to which Jesus had now set His footsteps; or that they would begin a disputation as to who should occupy the chief seat of honor at that Passover feast, and yet the bonds which bound them to worldly honors were even now so strong that they would indulge in selfish contention in the presence of their Master.

Jesus Acts as Servant to the Disciples.

It was customary for Jews on all occasions of feasting to have the feet washed before sitting down to eat, this service being performed by a servant, but at this

feast no servant was present, and therefore Jesus improved the occasion to act as servant to His disciples in order to teach them humility, and by an act of supreme condescension reprove them for the vanity which they had displayed. Having explained to His disciples, as He had done once before, how in His Father's kingdom the lowly shall be esteemed the greatest, and declared to them their appointment to sit as judges of the twelve tribes of Israel, He laid aside His outer garment, and taking up a towel and a basin of water He began to wash the disciples' feet. They must have felt a pang of conscience as they submitted thus to be made the recipients of their Lord's lowly service, and could not fail to appreciate the lesson which the act imparted, but no word of remonstrance, no confession of regret, no expression of desire to relieve Jesus of the humility which He took upon Himself was made, until Peter was reached. Then the first exhibition of shame was manifested: "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" said Peter; "I, the servant, cannot submit that the Master shall perform such an act of servitude to me." "What I do," replied Jesus, "thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." How very like the words He used when John shrank from baptizing Him! But Peter was blind to the purpose which Jesus had, and with a touch of indignation he therefore declared, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." With a look of sorrowing pity, and of extreme tenderness, and of merciful compassion, Jesus looked up into Peter's eyes and answered him: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Ah, Peter, you cannot resist this loving appeal; you cannot withstand this affectionate invitation; you cannot reject this offering of brotherhood in Christ. In a moment Peter's heart was touched, and the fountain of his loyalty was opened and came pouring out its devotion with the impetuosity of a cataract: "Yes, Lord," he exclaimed, "if it be a symbol of your love, you may wash not only my feet, but my hands and my head also." The lesson had borne fruit, for not only Peter but the rest as well saw how this washing performed by Jesus had in it a two-fold significance, teaching not only humbleness and brotherly love, but that it served also to show the need of purification by daily, yea hourly, cleansing of the heart from evil thoughts, vanities and self ambitions. "If," said Jesus, in the instructions which He gave after the feet-washing was finished, "I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you."

The Betrayer at the Feast.

As they sat at the table Jesus, referring again to the act of washing the feet as a symbol of purification, and with appearance of great grief said, "Ye are not all clean, I know whom I have chosen; he who eateth bread with Me, hath lifted up his heel against Me." The disciples were in ignorance of His meaning until

He spoke plainly. "One of you which eateth with Me, whose hand is with Me on the table, shall betray Me." In an instant every eye is lifted with profound astonishment, and the faces of the disciples turn in amazement every way, surprise looking on in violent disturbment. What does He mean? Who shall betray Him? How could perfidy find a brooding among His friends? It was an awful assertion, and to gain revealment of the traitorous act each of the disciples ask in great agitation, "Lord, is it I?" But the inquiry brings no answer. What, shall we all lie under the ban of this dreadful imputation? Shall each one regard with suspicion the other? Will He not tell us who this traitor is, that the innocent may not suffer possible accusing? The suspense is terrible, and Peter can endure it no longer; therefore, knowing the confidential relation which John bore towards Jesus, he begs him to discover if possible who shall be the betrayer. The answer which Christ had withheld from others He vouchsafed to John, whispering, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped." Having answered the question, Jesus pronounced the unutterable woe that should come upon the traitor, and then extended his hand to dip into the dish. The eye of John was now riveted upon Him; His hand was the focus of every look, thought and expectation of the disciple, who alone of the Twelve knew how the betrayer would be designated. Judas must have sat near Jesus, for when the Master's hand was withdrawn from the dish it held the sop that was offered to Judas, who, at the same moment, not understanding the significance of the offer, asked, "Lord, is it I?" In a low voice Jesus answered, "Thou hast said," or, "It is you who shall betray Me." But, with lowering brow, Jesus continued, "What thou doest, do quickly;" "Whatever be your scheme, and your plotting, do quickly what you have intended. If you have made a bargain to sell my life, keep your bonds: when My enemies seek Me they shall have no cause to search long, for I am ready."

Judas could not remain quiet under this arraignment, for though the other disciples, save John, did not understand the meaning of Jesus' words, Judas felt like one whose crime has photographed itself upon his face, and, hastily rising, he went out without so much as a word of excuse to his brethren.

After Judas had departed, possibly more resolute in purpose to deliver his Master into the power of His enemies, Jesus resumed His discourse with the disciples in a more hopeful spirit, and spoke of how His Father would glorify Him and the blessings which would come from His offering up. Affectionately, paternally, He said to them, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me, and as I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another."

Peter's Enthusiastic Loyalty.

Peter, the most emotional, vehement and eager of all the Twelve, anxiously asked, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" But receiving no reply, in a spirit of great fervidness he continued, "Why, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into



"HE TO WHOM I SHALL GIVE A SOP."—From the Painting by de Cespedes.

prison and unto death." Was not this zealous spirit of Peter's like that of the rich young man, who felt no sacrifice was too great for him to make that he might inherit eternal life, until Jesus asked him to give away his riches? True courage cannot be shown in the absence of peril, nor can devotion be proved except in the

presence of sacrifices. Peter, while holding a strong attachment for Jesus, was not yet free from the common weaknesses which influence nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of every thousand, and Jesus would now show him that his profession of sincerity was but the prompting of a momentary impulse, and that under trial he too would be found wanting. Therefore said Jesus to him, "Wilt thou lay down thy life for My sake? Why, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me." Then to the disciples Jesus addressed words of warning, telling them that while they were with Him they lacked nothing, but that now he was to be removed henceforth they must prepare to defend themselves against persecutions. Thinking that Christ spoke literally, they answered Him, "Lord, behold here are two swords," but these were not the weapons he meant should be opposed to the enemies of the gospel. Less than one sword was enough; no weapon could help them save that alone which proceeded from the word of God.

The Last Discourse.

The supper had now progressed so far that the lamb was next to be eaten, the first courses being of wine, unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The last cup of wine was set before them, when Jesus took up a loaf of bread, and blessing it, gave to each of the disciples a piece, saying, "Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." How solemn must have been the utterance of this injunction, signifying as it did the suffering which He was to endure within another day for the sins of the world. "And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins; this do ye, as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of Me.'" As ye do it, think of the mercies I have showed, of the sick that I healed, the afflicted that I lifted up into health, the dead that I restored, the cross of agony to which I am to be bound. Think of the thorns in My brow, the lacerations of My flesh under the scourge, the nailed hands and feet, the pierced side, and know ye that this is the sacrifice of which this supper shall be a memorial, to be repeated by Christians in all the ages to come in the life of this world.

The words spoken by Jesus, many of the disciples must have understood as being figurative of his sacrifice, which the supper was to commemorate, else they would have questioned him concerning its significance. It also appears that they now, for the first time, fully comprehended the awful sacrifice He was soon to make, and that no power would be interposed to prevent it. They were, therefore, cast down with sorrow at a realization that He was to be taken away from them. Their grief was not such as that felt by a man who loses a friend, or a parent who loses a child, or a child who loses a parent. To Christians death is robbed of its



JESUS GIVING THE CUP TO HIS DISCIPLES.

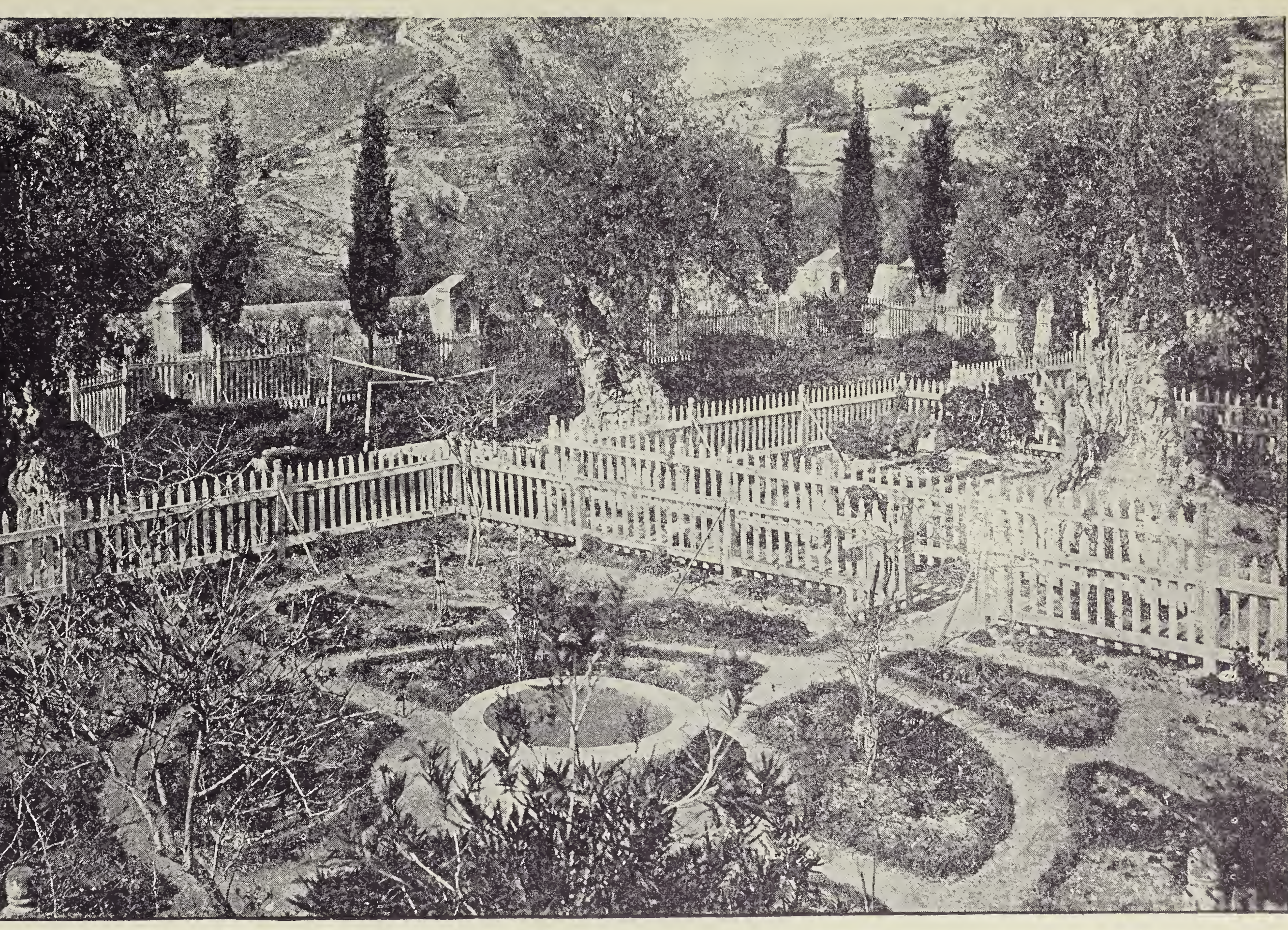
pangs by faith in a glorious resurrection, and a reunion in a happier country that lies beyond the shadows and the sufferings of this life. The loss of Jesus was to the disciples a loss of God ; they had not yet that consoling and soul-uplifting conception of Jesus which we have ; the Church that should impart that faith was only in process of building ; the foundation stone had been laid and the superstructure begun ; but its sanctuaries were still unfinished. Having, therefore, compassion on the friends who had followed Him thus far, He would cheer them with parting words of condolement : "Let not your hearts be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions ; if it were not so I would have told you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and, receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer : I have overcome the world."

Thomas and Philip could not yet understand Him ; their faith was not yet established ; they had no comprehension of the resurrection into eternal life through the life that Jesus was to give, and, therefore, they asked the way which led to Him, and a revealment of the Father. Jesus answered, "I am the way ; follow My teachings, and you will have a guide that will not mislead you. If ye had known Me ye should have known My Father also ; he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you, for My Spirit will be to you a constant consolement. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more ; but ye shall see Me in the encouragements which you will derive from a remembrance of Me and My promises. Peace I leave with you ; My peace I give unto you. If ye loved Me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto My Father, there to prepare a place for you in which we shall meet to abide together forever.

On the Way to Gethsemane.

It was now late in the evening, and the supper being ended, Jesus arose and with His disciples went out into the night and towards the Garden of Gethsemane, which was something more than half a mile from the walls of the city, and just across the brook Kedron. This beautiful spot, shaded with orchards of olive, fig and pomegranate, was a place frequently resorted to by Christ and His disciples, and as the night was one of merry-making in Jerusalem, as it was a night of gloom and sorrow to Jesus, He repaired to the garden to spend the hours in preparation for the awful event of the morrow.

As Christ and the eleven passed out of the chamber where they had eaten the Passover, He resumed His discourse, and probably drawing the simile from a fruitful vine which He saw on the way, said to his followers, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman." Comparing His disciples with the branches, He warned them that if they bore no fruit, then would they be cut off from the



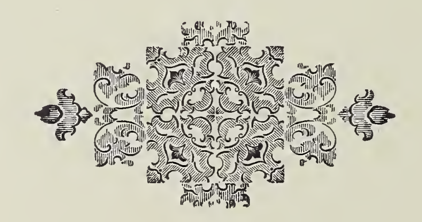
GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.—From Recent Photograph.

rewards which He had promised to give those who faithfully served Him ; but that if they were productive of good works, then would they be encouraged by an increase of faith to continue steadfast in doing the will of God and in the spreading of the gospel.

"I would have you know," said Jesus, "that as I have been persecuted so will you be, but you should bear everything for My sake, because while you recognize Me as Master, yet I so love you that you shall bear to Me the relation of friends. I have been hated without cause, and the prejudice of the Jews which has assailed Me, and which pursues Me to the death, will continue against you. They shall put you out of the synagogues ; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. A little while, and ye shall not see Me ; and again, a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to My Father."

The disciples wondered what He signified by declaring that after His disappearance they should see Him soon again, but Jesus did not see proper to tell them plainly that after His crucifixsion He would appear to them, and that they should be the happy witnesses of His ascension. He preferred to merely arouse their curiosity now, in order that they should become more impressed with the truth of all He had told them, when they saw the fulfillment of his words. After talking thus with His disciples, Jesus lifted His voice in prayer, praising God for the glory which was about to be manifested by His offering up. And He prayed fervidly for His disciples, that they might ever remain so faithful that their union in Him should be forever indissoluble ; and as He had been sent into the world, so had He sent the disciples upon a mission of like mercy, which He petitioned God to sanctify.

Whether the latter portion of Jesus' discourse was delivered on the way to Gethsemane, or in the room where the Passover was celebrated, must continue to be a subject for dispute ; but the import of His teachings and affectionate counsel and comfortings cannot be impaired by the indefiniteness of the place where He delivered them.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE GROAN IN THE GARDEN.

GETHSEMANE, which had so often invited Jesus to its shady groves, and where nature held communion with nature's God, and voice of prayer had mingled with the perfume of bursting bloom, was now to become a wailing place, where agony should dethrone comforting joy, and where invocation and praise-offering should give place to prayer of lamentation.

The crisis—grim, ghastly, overpowering,—was at hand, and Christ sought the seclusion of Gethsemane in which to strengthen His soul against the hour of His supremê suffering. Peaceful garden, still as a sleeping babe, scarcely a zephyr stirring leaf of olive, branch of fig, or twig of pomegranate, while the round moon throws down her silvery stairway as if bidding all the world to mount into the skies. Into this quiet retreat Jesus and the eleven entered, as voice of hallelujah reached their ears, borne on the still night-air from worshipers in Jerusalem; the song of the psalm singer, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake." And, "Blessed be He that cometh in the name of Jehovah." Strange words were these now, though sung at the conclusion of the Passover feast, for, instead of giving glory to God, the priests were coming to execute His Son, to condemn His mercy, to stifle truth. Jesus listened until the song was finished, then turning to His disciples He bade eight of them remain by the gate, while with Peter, John and James He went a little further towards the deeper shades. Here He paused, and with a look of grieving He said to them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me." Now see Him turning slowly away, and retiring alone a short distance, to the bending bow of an olive tree under which the shadows lie deepest. My God! Mark Him now, as in agony He drops down and falls on His face, and tears fill His eyes, and intense suffering wrinkles His brow, and appalling grief quivers on His lips. Oh, hear His prayer, rolling up from His immaculate soul and filling all the heavens with grief, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee. O, My Father, if Thou be willing, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." God not only hears that prayer, but all the eternal hosts fall down in sorrow, and all heaven is in lamentation; and out from that bright land where other grief is unknown came speeding a winged

messenger, a celestial comforter, bearing words of encouragement ; but His is a grief which even angels may not assuage. Again see Jesus in prayer, with yet more earnest supplication, and see how His anguish has started the bloody sweat upon His forehead, falling, drop by drop, upon the ground, precious sacrifice for sinful men. Oh, can it be, can it be, that this is Jesus, who gathered fragrance from the frankincense brought to His cradle, and from lilies that flung their sweetness into His sermons, and from the box of alabaster that broke at His feet? Is this Jesus, the comforter at Bethany, the resurrector at Nain, the oculist at Bethsaida? Is this the Christ, whose frown is the storm, whose smile is the sunlight, the spring morning His breath, the thunder His voice, the ocean a drop on the tip of His finger, heaven a sparkle on the bosom of His love, the universe the flying dust of His chariot wheel? Is this Christ, who is able to heal a heartbreak, or hush a tempest, or drown a world, or flood immensity with His glory? Ay, it is He, the Lord of earth and heaven ; He who had dwelt in the palaces of eternity, and to whom all worlds owed allegiance ! Yes, it is our Lord suffering all torments of which His human nature is capable.

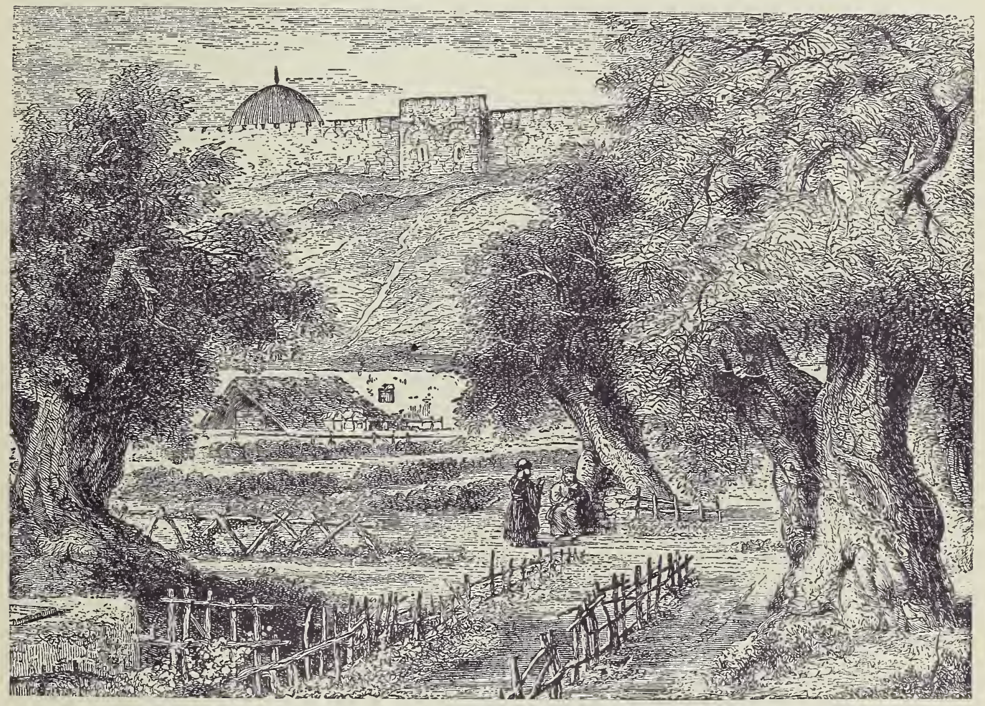
After an hour of soulful prayer, Jesus rises and goes to the three disciples whom He had set to watch, but they, overcome with sorrow, had fallen asleep. He first rouses Peter, that most fervidly earnest one, of whom He asked, not in spirit of complaining, "Couldst not thou watch one hour?" and to the others He addressed a like question, saying, "Why sleep ye? Rise, watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation ; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

After thus arousing and counselling them, Jesus went away again and prayed as before, but returning a second time He found the three disciples still sleeping, and awakening them He retired for a third time, and yet again returned to find them in deep slumber. Poor souls, it had been a week of excitement with them, in which fear and grief had kept a mastery of their senses, until exhausted, they could endure no more. Sleep had dropped down like a curtain to hide from them the anxieties which had come, and which were increasing ; therefore said Jesus, "Sleep on now, and take your rest for a little while. You could do nothing to aid Me ; the hour is come when I shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners." But soon He again disturbed them, saying, "Rise up ; let us go ; behold, he that betrayeth Me is at hand."

What was the Cup of Bitterness?

If Jesus was sent into the world to be made a sacrifice for our sins ; if, in the divine economy, it was ordained from the beginning that He should suffer and make expiation for the transgressions of all nations and all generations ; and if in Him were the attributes of a God, why did He agonize when the hour of fulfillment of his mission was at hand?

In Jesus, as before explained, there was the dual nature of man and God, He being the link which bound the human to the spiritual, thus being a mediator between mankind and God. Having been sent as an example to man, His human nature had predominance for the time over his spiritual nature, otherwise those whom He taught would have been less able to comprehend Him. In His acts He exhibited the power of a God, but in His teachings and examples His human



ANCIENT OLIVE TREES IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

attributes showed most conspicuously, and hence He was subject to and alike sensible to human pleasures and sufferings.

But why did God, the Father, accept His Son as a sacrifice for the sins of the world? Christ and God being one, did God share the agony with Christ, and if so, how? An incident of history will best answer these questions.

Story of the Captain's only Child.

A captain set sail across the Atlantic with his ship heavily laden with valuable merchandise. He had a large crew of men of different nationalities picked up from among the many sailors who resort to the wharves of great seaport cities, seeking engagements. This captain had a son, a bright boy of a dozen years,

with blue eyes, and tender looks, and affectionate ways, ever obedient, devoted to his father, and faithful to any duty entrusted to him. It would be a strange father who did not love such a son, and it would be stranger still if his affections were not increased by the fact that he was an only child. Our love is like our senses: If we lose an eye the other receives additional strength; if one of our arms be cut off the other becomes abnormally developed; if we lose hearing in one ear the other grows more acute, and thus it is that nature compensates somewhat for such losses. The same law of re-enforcement applies to our affections: If a man have many children he loves them all, but the man who has only one child is more devoted to it, he loves it with a deeper intensity than if his love were distributed among several.

Well, this captain loved his only son with such attachment and fervidness that he was miserable when the boy was out of his sight, he was always fearful lest some harm should come to him.

The voyage had not been entirely propitious at the start, but when the ship was not far from the coast of the country to which she was sailing a storm arose. The wind first came beating up from the south, and dark clouds rolled up in the west, and as they boiled and grew more ominous the batteries of heaven opened fire, turning cloud into blaze and dazzling flash and thundering roar. The captain saw that a gale would follow, which might develop into a dangerous storm, and he made haste to prepare for it. The sails were furled, save the main-course retained to give the ship steerage way; the jib and main, and the studding sail and the square-sail booms were secured, the hatches were batted down, and the ship made ready to run with bare poles before the wind. Soon the storm struck her with such force that a landsman on board would have thought the ship doomed. With stroke of wind came dash of wave; and while the ratlines and the stays rattled like hail on a window-pane, the great billows dashed up in mad endeavor to rend and engulf; higher and higher came the waves, fiercer and fiercer grew the winds, the thunder pealed louder, the lightning flashed faster and more blinding, and the rain beat down in torrential flow. Oh, it was a terrible storm, and nothing but a strong ship could weather it. After hours of battling, the horror of the situation was a thousand times increased by the discovery that the ship's timbers were sprung by the irresistible impact of tremendous waves, and she was making water rapidly. "To the pumps! To the pumps!" Every man of that crew must now do his duty, it is a work against death, human power opposing element of wind and wave, with darkness coming on. But labor as they might, the water gained steadily in the hold and the mad billows rolled up and over in greater fury. What is that noise roaring like thunder in pulsation above the howling of furious blast and madly impetuous surge? Breakers! Breakers! Heave the anchor! But it will not hold. Fire the gun! But it cannot be heard.



THE PRAYER IN THE GARDEN.—Photograph of Famous Painting.

Send up the rockets! Alas, who shall touch them off in the sea that is now running over as well as under? Who will carry a distress signal to the peak of the main royal yard—the peak halliards are blown away with the main royal yard! Who will go up? No one volunteers; it is an undertaking that seems to involve certain death, and though death is striding the deck, better to meet him there than away up among the topmost yard arms. Every face is pinched with fear, every breath is stilled to hear a word of encouragement. Presently a thin voice pours itself into the captain's ear: "Father, I will go up." See the tears rush into his eyes, and where there was boldness and determination before, see now an emotion which wrings that father's heart. But time is precious, beyond the hurtling clouds lies heaven; beyond the storm lies the sunshine. "My brave boy, here is the distress signal, carry it up; when my beloved child is willing to make such a sacrifice, God is not far off." The child seizes it in a firm hand and mounts to the maintop, "Oh, father, the wind blows so hard." "Look up, my son, and go on," and the child climbs to the main cap. "Oh, father, it is so dark that I cannot see you." "Look up, my son, and go on." And still upward the fear-beset boy climbs until his feet are on the cross-trees. "Oh, father, my limbs are weak and I am almost blown off." "Look up, my son, and go on." With nerveless grasp the heroic child still ascends until he reaches the main royal yard, where the main royal mast has been broken off by the force of the wind wrestling with the pennant. And there he fixes the signal. What a shout went up from the crew. Brave boy, a hero among a million, all the world must know of that act, generations must not forget it. But the father is silent, his heart seems to have been frozen by the icy terror that was upon him from the moment that his beloved and only child left the deck to climb the ratlines and the topmost mast, until God delivered him safely into his arms again. See the answering signal from the shore. Now the life-boats put out; closer and closer they draw, while the foundering ship moves swiftly towards the rocks. Boom! It is the glad sound of the gun that fires the lifeline. It struck, and, God be praised, it is made fast. Saved. Yes, through the heroism of that boy, the idol of a father, the whole crew is saved. What though the ship be lost, shall our gladness be less? No, it shall be all the greater, for now we know that the crew also would have been lost but for the sacrifice alike of father and only child.

The Arrest of Jesus.

When Judas went out of the supper room he repaired quickly to the high-priest and with him completed arrangements for arresting Christ. Caiaphas sent to the tower of Antonia and secured the services of a squad of Roman soldiers, while other members of the Sanhedrim enlisted a multitude—we know not how many —of the mobocratic spirits who were ready to undertake any enterprise that



"WHY SLEEP YE?"

promised them a small reward. They went well prepared to resist any defence which might be made by the followers of Jesus, for they were armed with spears and staves and other weapons. They also took with them torches and lanterns, for though the moon was at the full, the shades of Gethsemane were deep, and if Jesus should try to escape by hiding, lights would be necessary in prosecuting a search. Judas led the armed crowd into the garden where he knew Jesus often resorted, promising to approach Him in the guise of friendship and at the proper time betray Him to the officers by a kiss.

Jesus had seen the moving lanterns as they flashed through the trees and vines, and knew that His enemies were approaching, and He moved forward to where lay the sleeping disciples, whom He aroused, and made ready to receive the coming crowd. Judas being in the van, was first to address our Lord, saying, "Master, Master," in a tone of affected friendship, and then, drawing near enough, kissed Him on the cheek. To the first salutation Jesus replied in a manner which seems to indicate that He did not know the traitorous motive of Judas, for He replied, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" but when the kiss was given there was to Jesus an apparently sudden revealment of the purpose, and He hurtfully asked, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"

Whom Seek Ye?

The salutation of Judas brought the officers forward, whom Jesus accosted with the inquiry, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." "I am He," was the fearless reply, uttered with a majesty that well became a king of earth and of heaven. "I am He; what would ye? If ye come to arrest or to kill Me, behold, here I am; do what you will." The officers were not only amazed by the boldness of His acknowledgment, but were for the moment overcome with fear. Did they believe that He was the Messiah, and that they were in danger of being destroyed, as were the fifties sent to arrest Elijah, by an indignant God? Struck with terror, the crowd fell to the ground, and Jesus might have gone out of their presence without any effort made to stay Him, but He would not now set aside the cup prepared for Him. And again assuring them that He was Jesus whom they sought, He submitted to arrest. As an officer, named Malchus, a chief servant of Caiaphas, laid hand upon Him, Peter was so wrought up by the indignity thus put upon his Master, that, whipping out his sword, he struck violently at the officer, who avoided the fatal blow intended, but suffered the loss of an ear. Jesus reproved this exhibition of rashness in the fervid Peter, saying, "Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword;" and with a touch He healed the wound. But Jesus could not well repress the scorn He felt for the outrage which His enemies had come to inflict upon Him, through the mad envy and prejudice of ecclesiastical

bigotry. He asked them why they came in such force of arms to bind Him, as though He was a thief who had fled from justice ; why they would thus invade His privacy when He had been daily preaching in the synagogues, and being so



THE KISS OF BETRAYAL.—Drawn by Bida.

publicly before them that they might at any and more seemly time and occasion have arrested Him. But while He was thus talking, the officers were binding Him, and the disciples seeing Him now completely within the power of His

enemies, they began to think of their own safety, and escaped, save Peter and John, who did not wholly abandon Him, but followed the procession, keeping well in the rear, back to the city. As they walked along, a young man, with only a linen cloth to cover his nakedness, was drawn by some motive to follow the crowd, and was rudely seized by one of the officers, but he escaped, leaving his single garment in the hands of the man who would take him. Tradition says this young man was Mark, but with no other reason than that the incident is only recorded by that Gospel writer.

Jesus Before Caiaphas.

Though it was after the middle watch of the night, Jesus was taken at once to the palace of the high-priest, or rather to the high-priests, for Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, was acting jointly in the office with Caiaphas. Late as the hour was, there was such excitement, anxieties, and doubtless jubilations of the priests over His arrest, that when Jesus was brought into the court of the palace, Annas began at once to question Him, asking about His disciples, who they were, what devotion they had shown, where they were from ; and then he would know something about His doctrine. Jesus did not remain silent, but spoke boldly, saying, "Why, I have spoken openly to all the world ; I have had no secret motives ; all My teachings have been imparted in the synagogues before large audiences of the Jews. Why, therefore, do you ask Me such questions, when you might have answer from any of the thousands who have heard Me." The freeness of His speech, and His refusal to cringe in a spirit of abjection to the high-priest, was resented by one of the subservient minions of Annas, who gave Jesus a blow with the palm of His hand, at the same time asking, like a rowdy, "Answerest Thou the high-priest so?" The pale cheek of Jesus took on the flush of pain, and He said, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil ; but if well, why smitest thou Me?"

The Denial of Peter.

When the procession passed into the palace, John, who was evidently that other disciple, unnamed, went in with the crowd, but Peter, who had followed at some distance in the rear, when he came to the door was refused admittance, or else stood hesitating to make his desire for entrance known. John soon discovered his absence and going out obtained permission of the woman who guarded the door for Peter to enter. Both must therefore have been present when our Lord suffered the outrage of a blow from the hand of a guard, and this showed them that there was now no longer hope that Jesus would use His heavenly-given power to avert one tittle of the suffering which He had declared to them would be visited upon Him. Despair and grief filled their breasts, they realized that the

inevitable was humiliation, outrage, condemnation and crucifixion. It were well if they escaped like punishments.

The open court in which Jesus and the crowd stood was very large, and the morning hours having come it grew so cold that a fire was started, around which the assemblage gathered and sat down, Peter being among the rest. As they were warming themselves the porteress came in, and as Annas doubtless desired identification of the strangers that had followed Jesus, she pointed to Peter and said to the officers, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth," and directly to him, "Art thou not one of this man's disciples?"



A TYPICAL JEWISH MAIDEN.—From *The Christian Herald*.

Peter had occasion for a double fear, because he was not only under suspicion by reason of his being a disciple, but he was liable to punishment for having made an attack upon Malchus. He was now wholly within the power of his

enemies, the officers of the law, and hence we may well excuse him for first giving an ambiguous answer, and afterwards declaring that he even did not know Jesus. But his answer, made as it was under circumstances which may well give him pardon for his denial, nevertheless sorely troubled his conscience; He rose up and went out, but as he passed through the door and out onto the porch the cock crew. Here he stopped, desiring yet to linger as near Jesus as it was prudent, but was soon accosted by another woman, who accused him before all the servants that were there of being a disciple, but again Peter denied, with an oath, that he had any knowledge of Jesus.

About an hour afterward a kinsman of Malchus approached Peter, saying, "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" and several other servants, who had been among those who arrested Jesus, crowded around him, each presenting proof that Peter was one of the disciples, one of them saying, "Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean, as thy speech plainly shows thee to be." Then seeing that he was certainly exposed unless some awful expedient be adopted, Peter began to swear and curse, and otherwise to demean himself so unlike the reverent spirited disciples, that he diverted the strong suspicion directed against him. But as he was thus manifesting a sinful nature which he really did not possess, giving voice to imprecations and to emphatic denials of the accusings of the servants, Peter heard the cock crow again, and was startled by the appearance of Jesus as He was being led out of the court, who, as He passed by, cast a half-reproachful look upon the miserable disciple. On the instant Peter's tongue lost its cunning as he recalled the warning and prediction of Christ. The enormity of his sin rose up before him in a cloud of self-condemnation. He saw as by a flash how truly Jesus had measured his single-devotedness and how weak was the faith which he had asseverated and believed was invincible under the ordeal of any test. Remorse overwhelmed him and he went out of the court weeping bitterly.



CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SHAM TRIAL.

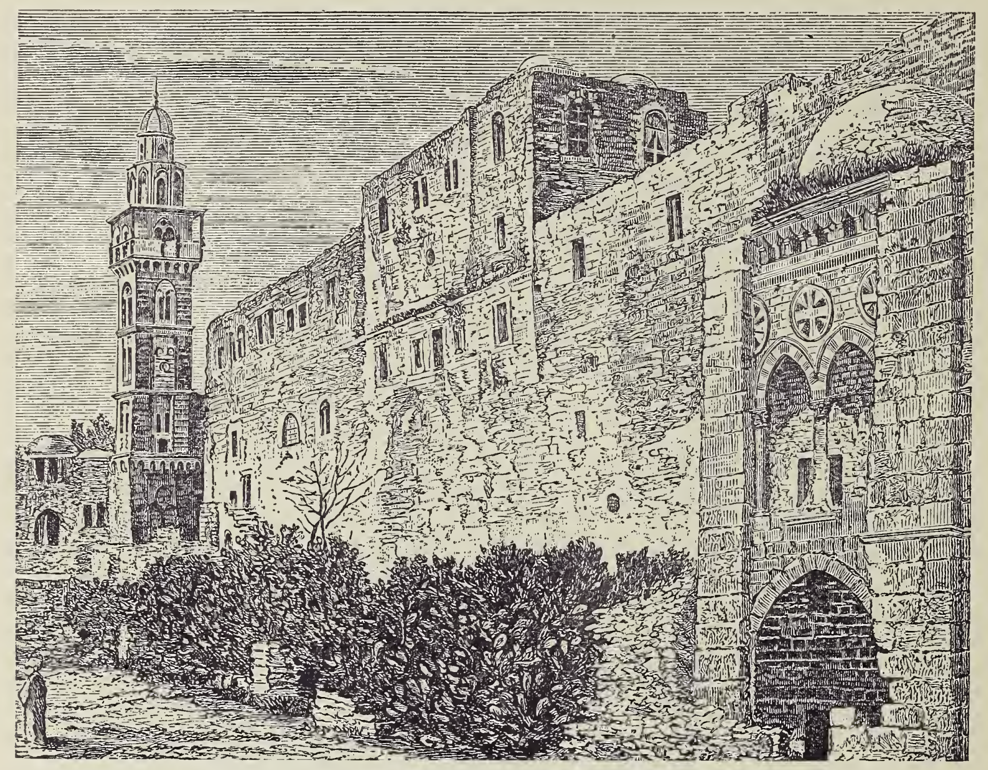
DURING the preliminary examination of Jesus before Annas, the chief priests had assembled in some building, possibly in some hall in Caiaphas' palace where they presumed to sit as a supreme court of the nation. The law of theocracy required the assembling of every member of the Sanhedrim when a vote was to be taken on the findings of the lower courts in cases where judgment of death had been given. We may therefore assume that Jesus had been thus judged by the court of Annas, and that when He was led therefrom He was taken directly before the Sanhedrim. The proceedings, however, were only a matter of form, because there was already a pre-judgment, so that the finding of Annas needed only a formal ratification before handing the prisoner over to Pilate.

The Death Sentence.

In the examination and trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim there was no more mercy or justice shown than the infamous court of Annas had exhibited toward the celestial Prisoner. There was a dearth of prosecuting witnesses; for a while no one would come forward to swear that they had even heard Jesus make a single blasphemous utterance, though a large number had been subpœnaed and brought into court, only to be sent out again because their statements were contradictory. There stood Jesus, meantime, with no counsel, none to speak a word in His defence, the pre-condemned victim of an ecclesiastical, Sanhedric mob. The judges, however, did not see how they could condemn Him without some evidence to support their baseless charges, so at length they secured two witnesses to testify that Jesus had said in their hearing, "I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." This was the resurrection of an utterance made by Jesus some time before, with material changes of what He had really said, but in no event could it be construed into blasphemy: so in their desperation the judges had to find some other evidence upon which to condemn Him.

Caiaphas was as cunning as he was unprincipled, bigoted and cruel, therefore he began to question Jesus, saying, "Do you have no answer to make to the charge supported by these witnesses?" But his fierce inquiry brought no reply from the Lamb of the world led to the shambles of a murderous court. "Then,"

said Caiaphas, "I will put Him upon an oath and ask Him a question which will convict Him either of blasphemy or of being an impostor." Caiaphas therefore said to Jesus, "I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God?" It was a momentous question, upon which hung life or death; to speak truly was to invite the cross; to deny was the avenue of escape. But Jesus answered bravely, "I am; nevertheless, I say unto you,



PILATE'S HOUSE IN JERUSALEM AS IT NOW APPEARS.

hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

At this confession Caiaphas flew into such a passion that he tore his clothes, and without awaiting action of the Sanhedrim, he took upon himself the responsibility of pronouncing Jesus guilty of blasphemy. When a vote was taken what should be the punishment, every member voting of that vindictive, merciless and ribald council favored a death sentence. Where was Nicodemus? Oh, he, like the rich young man and Peter, had lost his sense of justice in the face of danger and sacrifice, or else refused to cast a vote; and Joseph of Arimathea was

doubtless also afraid to record his honest judgment, because the danger from antagonizing that cruel body was very great. It might have caused personal violence, or dismissal in disgrace of the offending member. Conviction and sentence were the signal for the mob to offer indignities to the Lord of heaven. Hell was in temporary triumph, and the prince of darkness would now visit persecution on the Prince of Light, so the rabble spat on Him, and struck Him with their foul hands, and spurned Him with their filthy feet, all the while mocking and deriding Him; but He bore all, suffered all, in fulfillment of the words of Isaiah, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."



THE ECCE HOMO ARCH, FROM WHICH PILATE EXHIBITED JESUS TO THE MOB.

The charges against Jesus were now drawn up, and being duly attested and sealed, He was conveyed to the splendid quarters of the procurator, in the palace of Herod, on Zion Hill.

The accusation against Christ was composed of two principal charges: one that He had blasphemed, claiming to be the Messiah sent from heaven to deliver the nation. This laid Him under the condemnation of the

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Sanhedrim. The other was, that He had declared Himself a king who was come to rule over the nation. This made Him answerable to the Roman law, and this latter charge the hierarchal party would press most virulently, because they could not inflict the death penalty for a violation of ecclesiastical law. As the Jews were now Roman subjects, condemnation of Jesus to death must be made or consented to by the procurator. Pilate hated the Jews, and was domineering to such an extreme, and withal was so fiercely cruel, that he was justly named the "Javelin man." But his tyranny over and vindictive cruelty to the Jews did not make him forget that it became him to placate the rabbis and high-priests, whose influence, if exerted against him, might result in his deposement from the high office which he held, and these opposing influences made him the capricious creature that he was. But with all his immoralities, he had hardly such bitter prejudices as the Jews themselves, and was more disposed to justice, though he usually measured it out in small quantity and tempered it with expediency.

Jesus Before Pilate.

It was about eight o'clock in the morning—of Thursday—when Jesus was led up the marble stairs of Herod's palace, across a floor of richest mosaics, and under a ceiling dyed and inlaid with all the splendors of colors, and along snow banks of white and glittering sculpture. Condemned by one court He was now in the hall of another, from which mercy had been driven by frenzied passion, mad prejudice and wild ambition.

To meet Him on the tesselated pavement comes out an unscrupulous, cowardly, time-serving, compromising man, with some few traces of sympathy and fair dealing left in his composition—Governor Pontius Pilate. Did ever two such opposites meet? Luxury and pain, selfishness and generosity, sin and holiness, arrogance and humility, midnight and midnoon, Pilate and Christ. The bloated-lipped governor takes a cushioned seat and leans back at his ease. The Prisoner stands, His wrists manacled. In semicircle around Him are the fiery Sanhedrists, their eyes flashing and their fists brandished, prosecuting the case for the sake of religion ; for in all ages religious persecutors are the fiercest of all persecutors, and when the devil does get possession of good men he makes up by intensity for brevity of occupation. And if you have never been in an ecclesiastical court where they had some one on trial, you cannot understand the foaming infernalism of those old Jewish Sanhedrists. Governor Pilate begins to cross-question the Prisoner, and finds Him innocent, and wants to let Him go. To add to his caution in the matter, some one comes up and whispers in his ear. "What's that?" says the governor, his hand behind his ear to catch the words almost inaudible. It is a message from Claudia Procula, his wife, who has had a dream about the Prisoner's innocence and the danger of executing Him, and has just awakened

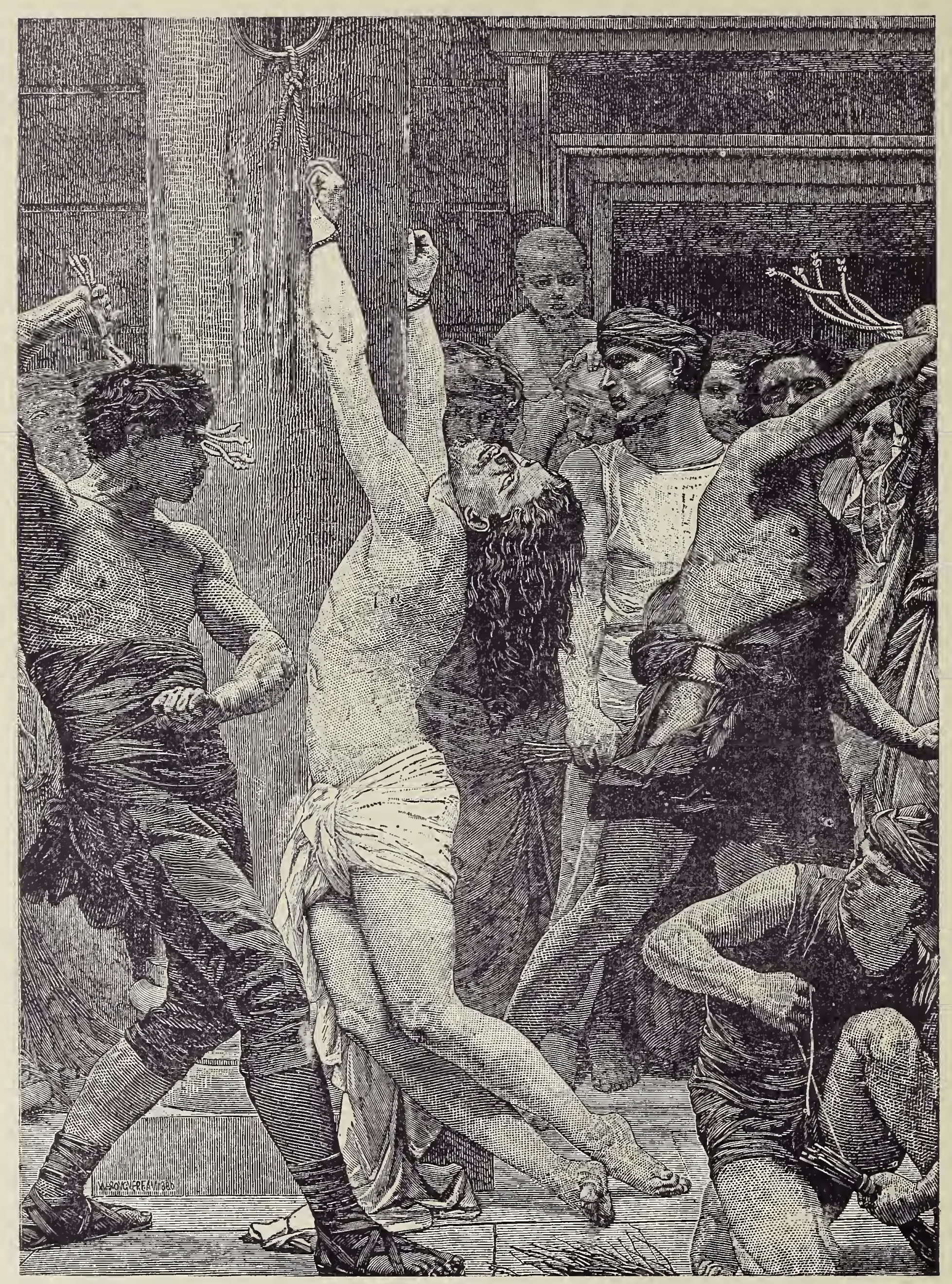
from this morning dream to send news of it to the governor, at that very moment on the judicial bench. And what with the protest of his wife and the voice of his own conscience, and the entire failure of the Sanhedrists to make out a case, he resolves to discharge the Prisoner from custody.



"BEHOLD THE MAN."

The Scourging of Jesus.

But that announcement let loose on the governor an equinoctial storm of indignation. They would get him recalled by the Emperor Tiberius at Rome. He should no more be Governor of Judea, and how would he feel then in disgrace, and perhaps be hanged for treason. He had already excited the old emperor's suspicion, which rested not until it finally did effect his banishment and suicide. So Governor Pilate, to compromise the matter, proposes the whipping of Christ instead of His assassination. He was tied to a pillar near the ground, and on His bent and bare back came the thongs of leather, with chunks of lead and bone intertwined to augment the force and horror of the stroke, and when He was led up from that with flushed cheeks and torn and quivering and bleeding flesh, He presented a spectacle of suffering in which Rubens and Bouguereau found the theme for their great masterpieces.



THE SCOURGING.—From the Painting by Bouguereau.

But the Sanhedrists were still unsatisfied. They wanted not only part of his nerves lacerated, they wanted all of them lacerated. They did not want a part of His blood, they wanted all of it, down to the last corpuscle.

The Remorse and Suicide of Judas.

The sentence of death had now been passed by the Sanhedrim and the execution of Jesus was a foregone conclusion.

Jerusalem was never before so excited over the approaching death of any man, and the public agitation extended rapidly over the outlying districts. Where were the nine apostles that fled in dismay when the Roman cohort and the rabbinical following invaded Gethsemane?

Perhaps they had not gone out of Jerusalem, yet it is probable that they extended their flight to Bethany, Bethphage or Bethlehem, where they might yet keep informed of the events transpiring in Jerusalem. But Judas surely did not leave the city; he was like a criminal held by some mysterious force to the vicinity where the dead body of his victim lies, and when the crucifixion of Christ was fixed to occur within a few hours, the news of this horrible determination promptly reached Judas' ears.



A BEARER OF BURDENS.
(Photograph of Elderly Woman of Palestine.)

When the tragic result of his traitorous enterprise loomed up before him like some creation of distemper, when he saw the blood of innocence swimming like a sea before his eyes, and the pale sad face of Jesus, the unoffending, all-merciful friend of the world, rising before him in a vision on which his very soul was forced to gaze, his whole being was overwhelmed and swallowed up by remorse; the agony which Jesus suffered in the garden was now the agony of Judas; how his heart cried out in despair, as the waves of contrition, regret, self-reproach and soul racking-remorse came rushing over him in irresistible flood. He had sold his right to a throne, he had brought his Master to the cross, he had

drowned his soul in innocent blood. Whatever may have been his motives, the result now tore him with insufferable anguish. But it may not be too late to save his Lord ! The thought came to him like a ray of light through the deepest cloud. He nursed the hope like a fond mother hugs to her breast her dying child when the doctor says one word of encouragement. He runs to the Temple, and making his way to the court of the priests, where none but consecrated feet might enter, he excitedly, nervously, prayerfully, begs the priests to do something yet to save his Master; "He is innocent; it is I alone that am guilty; I betrayed him without cause; I have falsely accused Him; take back this coin which is the wages of my guilt; do thou but deal justly; save yourselves from a crime which I have abetted; for the honor of yourselves, and the noble offices which you hold, and for the sake of the nation, allow this thing to go no further." This might have been his agonizing appeal, but it fell on ears steeled against mercy; the gates of compassion were shut; God alone could open them. The priests would not take back the coin on which the stains of innocent blood were as fadeless as on Macbeth's blade; the betrayer was now to them a piece of rubbish, which were better carted away than to lie about to offend their presence.

In the anguish of despair Judas threw the money with violence upon the marble floor and in mad desperation fled away to a spot of ground, the clay-yard of a potter, and there ended his miserable life with a rope.

Jesus Taken Before Herod.

Before execution of the sentence, Pilate, hoping that some means might yet be devised to save Jesus, sent Him to Herod for judgment as a Galilean, for as such He was not properly under Pilate's jurisdiction.

The appearance of Christ was highly pleasing to Antipas, who was flattered so greatly by Pilate's reference of the case to him that he dismissed the jealousy and enmity which he had theretofore felt for the Procurator, and a friendship between the two was by this means re-established. Antipas had heard so much about Jesus that his vanity was tickled by the appearance of the Messiah before him, who he felt sure would be glad to oblige the royal desire for an exhibition of supernatural power. When, therefore, Jesus was brought into his presence he condescendingly asked Him questions, prompted by an idle curiosity, and doubtless requested that He perform a miracle to satisfy his doubts; but to none of the king's questions would Jesus make any reply. This so angered Antipas that he turned from seriously considering His Messianic character to ridiculing His pretensions, and being desirous of escaping the obloquy and danger which might follow the execution of Jesus he thought to treat the charges against Him as unworthy of the dignity of a trial. But to humor the mob, which was intent on punishing their Victim, Antipas ordered a suit of royal regalia to be brought out,



THE SOLDIERS MOCKING JESUS.—Drawn by Bida.

and in which Jesus was invested, to be made a butt of by the crowd. This robe was of white, which the king usually wore, though probably not on state occasions, and served as a badge of royalty. In this garment Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate without giving judgment, for he recognized the dangers which threatened final disposition of the case, and therefore evaded responsibility by referring Jesus back to the governor.

After His return to Pilate Jesus was again scourged and given over to the custody of a squad of Roman soldiers, who, thoroughly brutalized, would now, with the Procurator's permission, visit upon Jesus cruelties surpassing any of the inflictions to which He had before been subjected. So, deriding Him as did the mob before Herod, the soldiers placed a reed in His hand as a mock symbol of authority, and then a crown of thorns, woven with the thorns pointing inward, was pressed down upon His temples until they lacerated the flesh of His brow and caused streams of blood to flow down His face. This cruelty did not yet satisfy their vindictive and pitiless desires, for while bending their knees in insulting genuflexions they rose and struck Him, and mocked Him, and spat on Him, and then as a crowning act of infamy they tore the reed out of His hand and gave Him a violent blow on the head. Oh, the heart grows sick while recounting the indignities and ruffianly violence that were put upon Him. After amusing themselves by ridiculing the Prisoner, Jesus was stripped of His royal robes and clothed again in His own apparel, and prepared for execution

"Shall I Release to You Barabbas?"

Executions were usually carried out on feast days, but it had been the custom for many years, out of regard for the feelings of the Jews, who held the Passover as their most sacred festival, to release one prisoner under sentence of death during Passover week, the culprit to be designated by a majority of the people attending the feast. Hoping to secure the release of Jesus, Pilate reminded the multitude of this custom, to which he received a vociferous request that it be now observed. This gave Pilate hope, for between Jesus and a man named Barabbas, who was under sentence of death for killing a Roman soldier in an *emeute*, he believed that the people would certainly ask the release of Jesus. But revolts were so common on account of the implacable hatred between the Jews and the Romans, that Barabbas had many sympathizers among the Jews, who probably regarded him as a patriot. The hierarchal party therefore would not suffer defeat now, and at the instigation of Caiaphas and the priests, the crowd shouted, "Give us Barabbas; give us Barabbas." Still hoping that the people might change their decisions at his implied request, he again asked, "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ? Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" But again the howling mob repeated their desire for the release of Barabbas.



"I FIND NO SIN IN THIS MAN."—Drawn by Bida.

Then asked Pilate, "What will ye then that I shall do with Jesus?" and they all cried out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him."

With all this merciless, fanatical rabble before him, whom it were dangerous to trifle with, in his anxiety to even yet do something that would avert the awful crime which was about to be sealed, Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him; I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But the mob's cries only became the louder and more inexorable, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him."

So, after all his merciful hesitation, Pilate surrendered to the demoniacal cry of "Crucify Him." But Governor Pilate, seated in the presence of the people, sends a slave to fetch him something. The constables are impatient to lead out the criminal to execution, and the mob in the street are waiting to glare on their Victim. But a pause is necessitated for a few moments. Yonder comes a wash-basin. The clear, bright water is poured into it, and Governor Pontius Pilate puts back the sleeves of his robe and thrusts his soft, delicate hands into the water and rubs them together, and then lifts them dripping for the towel fastened to the slave's girdle, and says, practically, "I wash my hands of this whole homicidal transaction. I will take none of the responsibility of this Prisoner's death. You must assume all of it." "He took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it.'"

Behold how ceremonies amount to nothing without correspondency of heart. It is well that the hands be washed. When God made three-fourths of the world water He commanded cleanliness, and as the ancients did not take the hint He put a whole world under water. The Jewish religion made handwashing a law. By minute direction the hands must be plunged three times up to the wrist, and the palm of one hand rubbed by the closed fist of the other. The Jewish Mishna gives elaborate rule on this subject. All well as a symbol. But here Governor Pilate proposes to wash off guilt which he does not quit and of which he makes small repentance. Pilate's wash-basin is a failure.

Alas for the agitated Judean governor, that night, after the court had adjourned and the Sanhedrists were gone, and only the tread of the sentinel at his door was heard, I think he rose from his tapestried and sleepless couch and went again to the laver and thrust his hands up to the wrist in the water, and cried, "Out! Out! thou crimson spot! How thou stickest fast, telling the story to me and the night and God! Is there no alkali that can remove this dreadful stain? Is there no chemistry to dissolve this carnage? Must I live and die with the blood of a martyr on my hands, and the blood of heavenly innocence upon my immortal soul?"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ASSASSINATION.

THERE is a wild mob going through the streets of Jerusalem. As it passes along it is augmented by the multitudes that come out of the lanes and the alleys to join the shouts and the laughter and the lamentation of the rioters, who become more and more ungovernable as they get towards the gates of the city. Fishermen, vagabonds, rude women, grave officials, merchant princes, beggars, mingle in that crowd. They are passing out now through the gates of the city, on their way to a hill white with bleached skulls of victims—a hill that was itself the shape of a skull, covered with skulls, and called Golgotha, which means the place of a skull. Here was the place appointed for the death of Jesus and two thieves, one named Gesmas, to suffer on His left, and the other named Dismas, to be crucified on His right, and the three were to die the most horrible, because the most excruciating of all deaths—death on the cross.

Three crosses in a row. An upright piece and two tranverse pieces—one on the top, on which the hands were nailed, and one at the middle, on which the victim sat. Three trees just planted, yet bearing fruit—the one at the right bearing poison, and the one at the left bitter aloes ; the one in the middle, apples of love. Norway pine, and tropical orange, and Lebanon cedar, would not make so strange a grove as this orchard of Calvary.

The cross was a gibbet on which criminals were put to death. It was sometimes made in the shape of a letter **T**, sometimes in the shape of the letter **X**, sometimes in the shape of the letter **I**—a simple upright ; sometimes two cross-pieces against the perpendicular bar, so that upon the lower cross-piece the criminal partially sat. But whatever the style of cross, it was always disgraceful and always agonizing. When Darius conquered Babylon, he put two hundred captives to death on the cross. When Alexander conquered Tyre, he put two thousand captives to death on the cross. So it was just an ordinary mode of punishment.

The carpenters have split the timber into two pieces. They are heavy and they are long pieces, for one of them must be fastened deep down in the earth lest the struggling of the victim upset the structure. They put this timber upon the shoulder of Christ very gradually, first to see whether He can stand it, and after they find He can bear it, they put the whole weight upon Him. Forward

now, to Calvary. The hooting and the yelling mob follow on. Under the weight of the cross, Christ, being weary and sick, stumbles and falls, and they jerk at His robe, indignant that He should have stumbled and fallen, and they cry: "Get up, get up!" Christ, putting one hand on the ground and the other hand on the cross, rises, looking into the face of Mary, His mother, for sympathy; but they tell her to stand back, it is no place for a woman—"Stand back, and stop this crying." Christ moves on with His burden upon His shoulders, and there is a boy that passes along with Him, a boy holding a mallet and a few nails. I wonder what they are for! Christ moves on until the burden is so great He staggers and falls flat into the dust and faints dead away, and a ruffian puts his foot on Him and shakes Him as he would a dead dog, while another ruffian looks down at Him wondering whether He has fainted away, or whether He is only pretending to faint away, and with jeer and contempt indescribable says: "Fainted, have you? fainted! Get up, get on!"

But it is not so much fainting as complete exhaustion that causes our Lord to sink to the earth, and from which goad of whip nor spur of heel can arouse Him under His burden. All the preceding night He had spent in agony; anguish of mind in the garden, agony of body before Annas, physical torture before Pilate; mortification, indignity, merciless abuse had drained His energies, and now the Best Friend in all the world is prostrate at the feet of iniquity. The thieves go on with their crosses, but Christ can no longer bear His own. Some one must help Him support it. But who? Ah, here is the man, Simon from Cyrene, a foreign Jew from a part of Africa which is now called Tunis. He has shown sympathy for the poor sufferer; besides, the infamy of having to carry a cross will not likely provoke any remonstrance from the Judean Jews. Here, put the cross on Simon's strong shoulders. Now let the procession continue. What a blessing in disguise was that sign of degradation to Simon, for under the weight of the cross he and all his family became converted; bearing the cross he won a crown.

The pale face, the bleeding back, the suffering body, plead to the eyes of tender women who follow, and they weep, weep for their Best Friend, weep for the sorrow which they could not minister to. "O daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves," said Jesus to His grieving sympathizers, "weep for your children too, for the woes that shall come upon Jerusalem and those who thus persecute and kill Me will be infinitely greater than the pains which I now bear."

After a while the place of execution is reached and the condemned are divested of their clothes and prepared for death by wrapping a single cloth about their loins. Of the clothes which Christ wore, the undergarment was in one piece, woven without seam from top to bottom, and was a robe like all the priests

wore; but the top garments were perhaps two in number, and these were torn into four pieces in order to allow a part to be given to each of the Roman guards. They were of no particular value except as relics, but the priestly robe was desirable, and its possession was therefore made the object of contention, which was settled only by casting lots to determine which of the four Roman soldiers should have it.



ON THE ROAD TO CALVARY.

Jesus being now stripped, the cruel rabbis insist on another punishment being given Him before the supreme one is inflicted; so at their instigation He is again scourged, and so cut by the fearful whip that His back is drained of its blood, and deep gashes lie open, red and swollen.

It is now twelve o'clock, the hour of His lifting up is at hand. Then they put the cross upon the ground, and they stretch Christ upon it, and four or five men hold Him down while they drive the spikes home, at every thump a groan, a groan! And while the nails are driven through the flesh and bones and tendons, and the little blood left in temple and hands and feet is trickling down over the cross, in His agony Jesus lifts His voice in compassionate cry and prayer for His enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Christ has only one garment left now, a cap, a cap of thorns. No danger that it will fall off, for the sharp edges have punctured the temples, and it is sure and fast. One ruffian takes hold of one end of the short beam of the cross, and another ruffian takes hold of the other end of the short beam of the cross, and another ruffian puts his arms around the waist of Christ, and another ruffian takes hold of the end of the long beam of the cross, and altogether they move on until they come to the hole digged in the earth, and with awful plunge it jars down with its burden of woe. It is not the picture of a Christ, it is not the statue of Christ, as you sometimes see in a Roman Catholic Cathedral ; but it is the body of a bleeding, living, dying Christ.

Darkness About the Cross.

There were three or four absences that made that scene worse. First, there was the absence of water. The climate was hot, the fever, the inflammation, the nervous prostration, the gangrene had seized upon Him, and He terribly wanted water. His wounds were worse than gunshot fractures, and yet no water. A Turk, in the thirteenth century, was crucified on the banks of a river so that the sight of the water might tantalize him. And oh, how the thirst of Christ must have tantalized as He thought of the Euphrates and the Jordan and the Nile, and all the fountains of earth and heaven poured out of His own hand. They offered Him an intoxicating draught made out of wine and myrrh, but He declined it. He wanted to die sober. No water.

While the mob are howling and mocking and hurling scorn at the chief object of their hate, the darkness hovers and scowls and swoops upon the scene, and the rocks rend with terrific clang, and the choking wind, and moaning cavern, and dropping sky, and shuddering earthquake declare in a whisper, in groan, in shriek, "This is the Son of God."

The world has seen many dark days. About fifteen summers ago there was a very dark day when the sun was eclipsed. The fowls at noonday went to their perch, and we felt a gloom as we looked at the astronomical wonder. It was a dark day in London when the plague was at its height, and the dead with uncovered faces were taken in open carts and dumped into the trenches. It was a dark day when the earth opened and Lisbon sank. But the darkest day since the creation of the world was the day when the carnage of Calvary was enacted. It was about noon when the curtain began to be drawn. It was not the coming on of a night that soothes and refreshes ; it was the swinging of a great gloom all around the heavens. God hung it. As when there is a dead one in the house you bow the shutters or turn the lattice, so God in the afternoon shut the windows of the world. As it is appropriate to throw a black pall upon the coffin as it passes along, so it was appropriate that everything should be sombre

that day as the great hearse of the earth rolled on, bearing the corpse of the King.

Spectators of the Tragedy.

The crowd that stood about the cross was a mixture of friends and enemies, of sorrowing companions and malignant hate. There was a brutal soldiery gambling for the Lord's garment, while Joseph of Arimathea would have given much of his wealth to have possessed it as a sacred relic. Mary, the mother of Jesus, would like to have had it. How fondly she would have hovered over it, and when she must leave it with what tenderness she would have bequeathed it to her best friend! It was the only covering of Christ in darkness and storm. That was the very coat that the woman touched when from it there went out virtue for her healing. That was the only wedding garment He had in the marriage at Cana, and the storms that swept Galilee had drenched it again and again. And what did they do with it? They raffled for it. We have heard of men who gambled away their own garments, who gambled away their children's shoes, who gambled away the family Bible, who gambled away their wife's last



THE CRUCIFIXION.

dress; but it adds to the ghastliness of a Saviour's humiliation and the horror of the crime when I hear Jesus in His last moments declaring, "They parted My garments among them, and for My vesture did they cast lots."

In the group were also rulers, scribes and chief priests who had been at once complainants, prosecuting witnesses, jury, judge and executioners; who while He hung on the cross vented their murderous rage by mocking Him with all manner of insulting and ribald cries. And the soldiers likewise railed on Him, and offered Him vinegar as an insult, saying, "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself." And to the vulgar taunts of the mob was now added bitter revilings of one of the thieves, who twisted his head around far enough to set a contemptuous gaze on Christ and to hiss at Him through his teeth, "If Thou be the Christ, save Thyself and us." But the other thief, not wholly conscienceless, whose crimes had not stifled his sense of mercy and justice, which if he had not followed he could yet appreciate, shamed his confederate, and rebuked him for joining in the insults to one who, unlike themselves, had committed no offence, and who was indeed the true type of innocence. And having believed on Christ, the penitent thief said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Nor was this conversion at the last hour of life without reward, for his cry was answered, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

But there were rays of light that streamed into the crucifixion. As Christ was on the cross and looked down on the crowd of people He saw some very warm friends there. The first in all that crowd was

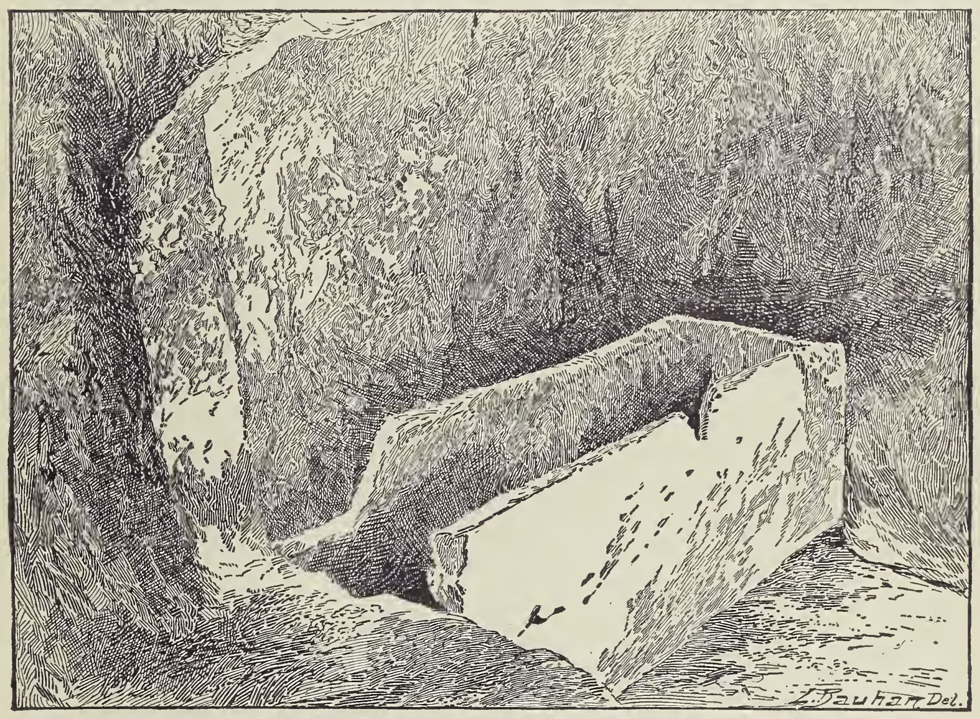
His Mother.

You need not point her out to me. I can see by the sorrow, the anguish, the woe, by the upthrown hands! That all means mother! "Oh," you say, "why didn't she go down to the foot of the hill and sit with her back to the scene? It was too horrible for her to look upon." Do you not know when a child is in anguish or trouble it always makes a heroine of a mother? Take her away, you say, from the cross. You cannot drag her away! She will keep on looking; as long as her Son breathes, she will stand there looking. What a scene it is for a tender-hearted mother to look upon! How happily she would have sprung to His relief! It was her son. Her son! How gladly she would have clambered up on the cross and hung there herself if her Son could have been relieved! How strengthening she would have been to Christ if she might have come close by Him and soothed Him!

If the mother of Jesus could have only taken those bleeding feet into her lap! If she might have taken the dying head on her bosom! If she might have said to Him, "It will soon be over, Jesus, it will soon be over, and we will meet again,

and it will be all well.'' But no; she dared not come up so close. They would have struck her back with their hammers. They would have kicked her down the hill. There can be no alleviation at all. Jesus must suffer and Mary must look.

I suppose she thought of the birth-hour in Bethlehem. I suppose she thought of that time when, with her Boy in her bosom, she hastened on in the darkness in the flight toward Egypt. I suppose she thought of His boyhood when He was the joy of her heart. I suppose she thought of the thousand



THE SUPPOSED TOMB OF THE SAVIOUR, AS IDENTIFIED BY GENERAL GORDON.—From *The Christian Herald*.

kindnesses He had done her, not forsaking her or forgetting her even in His last moments; but turning to John, and saying, "There is mother, take her with you. She is old now. She cannot help herself. Do for her just as I would have done for her if I had lived. Be very tender and gentle with her. Behold thy mother!'' She thought it all over, and there is no memory like a mother's memory, and there is no woe like a mother's woe.

And among His sorrowing friends, whose grief was but little less than was that of His mother, were Mary, wife of Cleophas, one of the first mothers of the

church, and Mary Magdalene, the penitent who had anointed Him, or that other Mary from whom He had cast out seven devils, and Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead, and Mary and Martha the two sisters, and John His beloved disciple, and Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, and Simon of Cyrene, and Mary Salome and Susanna Veronica, and perhaps many other dear friends, all of whom loved Him unto death. Oh, the wail of woe that went through that crowd when they saw Jesus die! You know the Bible says if all the things Jesus did were recorded, the world would not contain the books that would be written. It implies that what we have in the Bible are merely specimens of the Saviour's mercy. Where we are told of one blind man who got his eyesight, I suppose He cured twenty that we are not told of. Where He cured the one leper, whose story is recorded, He might have cured twenty lepers. Where He did one act of kindness mentioned, He must have done a thousand we do not know about.

I see those who received kindnesses from Him standing beneath the cross, and one says, "Why, that is the Jesus who bound up my broken heart!" And another, standing near the cross, says, "That is the Jesus who restored my daughter to life." Another looks up and says, "Why, that is the Jesus who gave me my eyesight." And another looks up and says, "That is the Jesus who lifted me up when I was sick; oh, I can't bear to see him die!" Every stroke of the hammer drove a spike through their hearts. Every groan of Christ opens a new fountain of sorrow.

The Death.

The hours pass on, and it is twelve o'clock of the Saviour's suffering, and it is one o'clock, and it is two o'clock, and it is almost three o'clock. Take the last look at that suffering face; wan and pinched, the purple lips drawn back against the teeth; the eyes red with weeping and sunken as though grief had pushed them back; blackness under the lower lid; the whole body adroop and shivering with the last chill; the breath growing feebler and feebler and feebler and feebler until He gives one long, deep last sigh. He is dead! Oh, my soul, He is dead! Can you tell me why? Was He a fanatic dying for a principle that did not amount to anything? Was He a man infatuated? No; to save your soul and mine from sin, and make eternal life possible He died. There had to be a substitute for sin. Who shall it be?" Let it be Me," said Christ; "let it be Me."

The brigands of Jerusalem had done their work. Dizzy, swooning, feverish—a world of distress is compressed in two words: "I thirst!" O skies of Judea, let a drop of rain strike on His burning tongue! O world, with rolling rivers, and sparkling lakes, and spraying fountains, give Jesus something to



JESUS LAID IN THE TOMB OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

drink! If there be any pity in earth, or heaven, or hell, let it now be demonstrated in behalf of this Royal Sufferer. The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those people who died in crucifixion—a powerful opiate to deaden the pain; but Christ would not take it. He wanted to die sober, and so He refused the wine. But afterward the soldiers go to a cup of vinegar, and soak a sponge in it, and put it on a stick of hyssop, and then press it against the hot lips of Christ. You say the wine was an anæsthetic, and intended to relieve or deaden the pain. But the vinegar was an insult. I am disposed to adopt the theory of the old English commentators, who believed that instead of its being an opiate to soothe, it was vinegar to insult. Malaga and Burgundy for grand dukes and duchesses, and costly wines for bloated imperials; but stinging acids for a dying Christ. He took the vinegar.

When the last hour of His suffering was at hand, nearly three o'clock in the afternoon, just before death had come to bind up His pain with the balm of easement, He raised His voice and cried, "My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me." And again He murmured, "It is finished," and then arousing all the small spirit that was yet in Him He feebly cried, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." And thus He died.

The Earthquake.

At the moment that Jesus expired all the world seemed plunged into convulsion of grief; the earth trembled and quaked until rocks were burst asunder, and gaping rents and violent upheaval unloosed the dead and shook life again into many corpses, and the great Temple toppled until the rich veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was torn in twain. So appalling was the phenomenon that even the centurion having command of the guards who were set to watch, exclaimed, "Certainly this was a righteous Man. This was truly the Son of God," and great fear fell on all. But the friends of Jesus still lingered about, awaiting some chance to take the precious body, or watching what the Lord's enemies would do.

Toward evening as the faithful watchers were still keeping their vigils they saw a body of soldiers approaching armed with clubs to break the bones of the crucified three, as was customary, a merciless way for hastening death while increasing suffering. When the soldiers reached the bodies they found the two thieves still alive and in conscious agony, the legs of these they broke, but when coming to Jesus they found Him dead and hence did not break His bones, but to assure themselves they plunged a spear into His side and from the wound flowed blood and water

The day following the crucifixion was the Holy Sabbath, when it was unlawful to allow a body to remain upon the cross, so that the Jews had asked permission



ENTOMBMENT OF CHRIST.



THE SHEIK NOW IN CHARGE OF MT. CALVARY.—From *The Christian Herald.*

of Pilate to send a squad of soldiers to finish the execution, but almost at the same time, or directly after, Joseph of Arimathea, a rich Jew, who had long been a secret follower of Christ, but who made no open profession of his belief through fear of his people, went to Pilate and begged the privilege of taking down the body of His Lord and giving it burial in his own sepulchre.

After Pilate had assurance that Christ was indeed dead he commanded the centurion to take down and deliver the body to Joseph. Nicodemus now also revealed his love for Jesus by bringing rich spices, and a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes with which to anoint the body, and fine linens in which to wind it after the manner of Jewish burials. And the two took the body, and accompanied by other friends they reverently laid it away in a new tomb—hewn in the rock—which might have been prepared beforehand for Joseph's own body. The place, we are told, was in the garden, near the place of crucifixion, but the spot, while marked by tradition, it is impossible for us now to positively fix upon. Here the body was carefully deposited and a great stone was rolled against the door, to protect the tomb from riflement by Jews, who now seemed to have some fear that Jesus would rise on the third day, as He had prophesied.

The sacrifice is completed, the suffering is over. The Holy One lies sleeping the last sleep, the ransom is paid, the redemption of the world is accomplished.



CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE RESURRECTION.

THE Jews obtained leave to seal the sepulchre and to set a guard about it, but let us nevertheless visit this tomb where lay buried a King, a Conqueror, an Emancipator, a Friend, a Brother, a Christ, to see how the body was prepared and deposited. Monarch of the universe, but bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, and sorrow of our sorrow, and heart of our heart. "Come see the place where the Lord lay."

It has for surroundings a manor in the suburbs of Jerusalem—a manor owned by a wealthy gentleman by the name of Joseph. He was one of the court of seventy who had condemned Christ, but I think he abstained from voting, or, being a timid man, was absent at the time of the casting of the votes. He had laid out the parterre at great expense. It was a hot climate, and I suppose there were broad-branched trees and winding paths underneath them, while here the waters rippled over the rock into a fishpool, and yonder the vines and the flowers clambered over the wall, and all around there were the beauties of kiosk and arboriculture. After the fatigues of the Jerusalem court room, how refreshing to come out in these suburbs botanical and pomological.

I walk a little farther on in the parterre and I come across a cluster of rocks, and I see on them the marks of a sculptor's chisel. I come still closer and I find that there is a subterranean recess, and I walk down the marble stairs, and come to a portico, over the doorway an architecture of fruits and flowers chiseled by the hand of the sculptor. I go into the portico, and on either side there are rooms, two, or four, or six rooms of rock; in the walls, niches, each niche large enough to hold a dead body. One of these rooms of rock is especially wealthy with sculpture. It is a beautiful and a charming spot. Why all this? The fact was that Joseph, the owner of that parterre, of that wealthy manor, had recognized the fact that he could not always walk these gardens, and he sought this as his own last resting-place. What a beautiful spot in which to wait for the resurrection.

Mark well the mausoleum in the rock. It is to be the most celebrated tomb in all the ages; Catacombs of Egypt, tomb of Napoleon, Mahal Taj of India, nothing compared with it. Christ had just been murdered, and His body must be thrown out to the dogs and the ravens, as was customary with crucified bodies, unless there be prompt and effective hinderance. Joseph, the owner of the mausoleum, begs for the body of Christ, and he takes and washes the poor and mutilated frame from the blood and the dust, and shrouds it and perfumes

it. I think embalmment was omitted. When in olden times they wished to embalm a dead body, the priest with some pretension of medical skill would show the point between the ribs where the incision was to be made. Then the operator would come and make the incision, and then run for his life else he would be slain for violating the dead body. Then the other priests would come with salt of nitre and cassia, and wine of palm tree, and complete the embalmment. But I think in this case embalmment was omitted, lest there be more excitement and another riot.

The Entombment of Jesus.

The funeral advances. Present : Joseph, the owner of the mausoleum ; Nicodemus, who brought the flowers ; and the two Marys. Heavy burden on the shoulders of two men as they carry the body of Christ down the marble stairs and into the portico, and lift the dead weight to the level of the niche in the rock, and push the body of Christ into the only pleasant resting-place it ever had. These men, coming forth, close the door of rock against the recess. The government, afraid that the disciples will steal the body of Christ and play resurrection, put upon the door the seal of the Sanhedrim ; the violation of that seal, like the violation of the seal of the United States Government, or of the British Government, was always followed with severe penalties.

A regiment of soldiers from the Tower of Antonia is detailed to guard that mausoleum. At the door of that tomb, a fight took place which decided the question for all graveyards and cemeteries. Sword of lightning against sword of steel. Angel of God against the military. The body in the crypt begins to move in its shroud of fine linen and slides down upon the pavement, moves through the portico, appears in the doorway, comes up the marble steps. Christ, having left his mortuary attire behind Him, comes forth in the garb of a workman.

There and then was shattered the tomb, so that it can never be rebuilt. All the trowels of earthly masonry cannot mend it. Forever and forever it is a broken tomb. Death that day, taking the side of the military, received a horrible cut under the angel's spear of flame, and must himself go down at the last—the King of Terrors disappearing before the King of Grace. "The Lord is risen." Hosanna ! Hosanna !

Christ Appears to Mary.

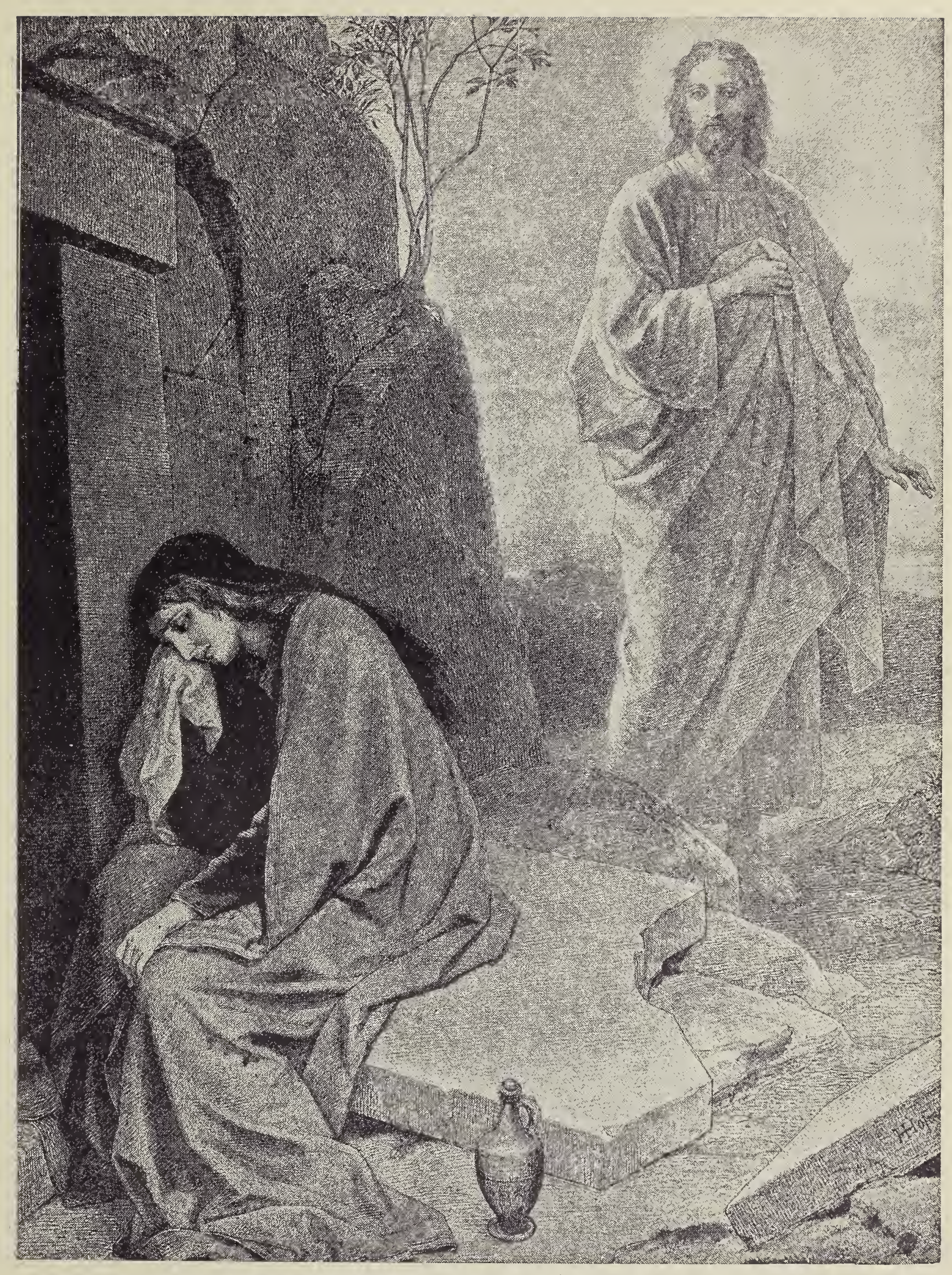
But while we have been looking at the tomb, lo, the morning breaks, the gray of approaching day begins to creep up the horizon, followed by a train of empurpled light. The guards have beaten a precipitate retreat before the flaming presence of an angel that has broken the seal and rolled away the rock that served as a door to the sepulchre. And, now, through the shadows of the early morning, we see several figures gliding softly, stealthily, towards the tomb, and as they come nearer, we discover them to be female friends of the dead Lord, women who

had spent the night preparing spices with which to anoint and perfume the body. Among them we are able to identify Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils, and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, and Joanna.

We see them come to the tomb, and mark their astonishment at beholding the stone displaced, and witness their grief following the belief that the body of their Lord has been stolen by the Jews.

Mary Magdalene, having preceded the others, and being first to discover that the tomb was open, ran in haste back to the city to notify Peter and John, but her companions, being curious to know what had been done, passed into the sepulchre. They were rewarded for their hopeful inquisitiveness by the sight of two angels in robes of brightness, standing by them. The mysterious presences greatly alarmed them, and they bowed down in their fear; but one of the angels quieted their alarm by saying, "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here; but is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord lay, and go quickly and tell His disciples."

The women hurried away, with feelings strongly mingled with fear and gladness. But Mary had so long preceded them that she first found Peter and John, and in tears told them that the Jews had stolen the body, and that she knew not where they had secreted it. All was excitement in that house, for Peter and John, and Mary, the Lord's mother, were now living together, and they were all alike moved with anxiety. In another moment the two disciples were running towards the tomb. John, being the younger, outstripped Peter, but when he came to the sepulchre he was afraid to enter at once, so that the impetuous and fearless Peter rushed immediately in, and was directly afterwards followed by John. They found the tomb empty, as Mary had told them, but there still lay before them all the grave clothes in which the body of Jesus had been bound; the cloth that was wrapped about the face being rolled up and deposited in one place, and the linen used in covering the body and limbs laid in another place. Now were the spirits of the disciples indeed depressed, for they had no doubt that the Jews had stolen the body and hidden it in a place where the friends were least likely to discover it. But while the two were sorrowfully discussing the events which had seemed to terminate so disastrously, Mary Magdalene returned, her intense grief making it impossible for her to remain away from the spot where the remains of her Lord had last been deposited. She stopped at the open door of the sepulchre and fell to weeping, but still hoping that there might be a mistake, or that she might yet discover something that would help her to find the body, she at length looked into the tomb and beheld to her joy two angels in robes of dazzling brightness, one sitting where the feet and the other where the head of Jesus had lain. One of the angels addressed her, saying, "Woman, why weepest thou?"



MARY AT THE SAVIOUR'S TOMB

to which she tearfully answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

Christ Reveals Himself to Mary.

What effect the angel's speech had on Mary we know not, but she turned sorrowfully around and met a person in gardener's apparel as if he had come forth at that early hour to water the flowers or uproot the weeds from the garden, or set to reclimbing the fallen vine—some one in working apparel, his garments perhaps having the sign of the dust and the dirt of the occupation.

Mary Magdalene, on her face the rain of a fresh shower of weeping, turns to this workman, and charges him with the desecration of the tomb, when, lo! the stranger responds, flinging His whole soul into one word which trembles with all the sweetest rhythm of earth and heaven, saying, "Mary!" In that peculiarity of accentuation all the incognito fell off, and she found that instead of talking with an humble gardener of Asia Minor she was talking with Him who owns all the hanging gardens of heaven, constellations the clusters of forget-me-nots, the sunflower the chief of all, the morning sky and midnight aurora, flaring terraces of beauty, blazing like a summer wall with coronation roses and giants of battle. Blessed and glorious mistake of Mary Magdalene!

Mary would have embraced His feet in her joyful discovery, but Jesus lovingly repelled her, saying, "Touch Me not, I am not yet ascended to My Father." Mary must have sped on nimble feet to apprise the other women and the disciples, who perhaps were near by, but as they turned back Jesus met them with the gracious salutation, "All hail." In worshipful reverence they fell at His feet and did Him the greatest reverence, to which loving demonstration He said, "Be not afraid; go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me."

The women went back with all haste to the city to tell such of the disciples as they could find, the glorious news that Christ was indeed risen, but it appears that however earnestly they related the glad fact, and however persistently and minutely they described His appearance, none of the disciples could be made to believe the story; they thought that there was some deception, or exaggeration, or unfathomable motive. Peter had been to the tomb and he had neither seen an angel nor his risen Lord, and John, whom Jesus so loved, had been no more fortunate. The people would therefore wait for other evidence before believing.

But the report of Christ's resurrection spread with great rapidity through Jerusalem, and with such general inclination to believe that it might be true that the priests felt the importance of taking measures to stop its further circulation and to follow the declaration with equally swift denial. The soldiers set to watch the sepulchre had made report to the rabbis of the vision which they had beheld,



JESUS APPEARING TO MARY IN THE GARDEN.—Drawn by Plockhorst.

and this made the high-priests all the more anxious. They accordingly sent for the watch and by the payment of bribes induced them to declare that while they were sleeping the disciples came and stole the body. And this is the explanation of the Lord's disappearing from the tomb which the Jews continue to give.

Christ on the Road to Emmaus.

The next appearance of Christ was to Peter, but the circumstance of the meeting is not recorded. Soon after He revealed Himself under singular conditions to two other disciples, one of whom was Cleophas, who having no longer occasion to remain in Jerusalem, had left the city and started on their way to Emmaus, which was a small village about eight miles northwest of Jerusalem. Their journey was a sad one. Jesus, who had been their admiration and their joy, had been basely massacred, and entombed. As with sad faces and broken hearts they passed on their way, a Stranger accosted them, who becoming a familiar and pleasant companion, they told to Him their anxieties and bitterness of soul. He in turn talked to them, mightily expounding the Scriptures. He threw over them the fascination of intelligent conversation. They forgot the time and noticed not the objects they passed, and before they were aware came up in front of their house. They paused before the entrance, and attempted to persuade the Stranger to tarry with them. They pressed upon Him their hospitalities. Night was coming on and He might meet a prowling wild beast or be obliged to lie unsheltered from the dew. He could not go much further now. Why not stop there, and continue their pleasant conversation? They took Him by the arm and insisted upon His coming in, addressing Him in the words: "Abide with us, for it is toward evening." The lamps were lighted, the table was spread, socialities were enkindled. They rejoiced in the presence of the Stranger guest. He asked a blessing upon the bread they ate, and then handed a piece of it to each. Suddenly and with overwhelming power the thought flashed upon the astounded people—It is the Lord! And as they sat in breathless wonder, looking upon the resurrected body of Jesus, He vanished. The interview ended. He was gone. But they knew that their Guest was the risen Lord.

Jesus Appears to the Eleven.

With joyful steps the two disciples returned with all possible haste to Jerusalem, where they found the other disciples gathered and discussing a report which Peter had just made them of having seen Jesus. To this glad news the two added their testimony and related all the circumstances of their meeting, and their lengthy conversation with Him, yet, for some reason, while the disciples believed Peter they doubted Cleophas and his companion ; but while they were thus talking and partaking of the evening meal, Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst, and

hailed them with the fraternal salutation, "Peace be unto you." But instead of recognizing Him, they were terrified at the belief that their Visitor was a spirit. Jesus thereupon upbraided them for their unbelief, and baring His hands and feet He bade them look upon His wounds, and the scars that were upon Him ; but they still doubted. They could not understand. They had seen Him perform miracles and wonders, but the miracle of His appearing was to them a transcending of the raising of the widow's son, and of Jairus's daughter and of Lazarus.



ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS.

To further establish His identity to their weak understanding Jesus called for meat, and when the disciples gave Him a piece of broiled fish and some honey, He ate before them, and then repeated to them the instructions and prophecies which He had given them at the last Passover feast, and He breathed on them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Before this evidence their eyes were opened to the truth, and they believed. But Thomas was not among the disciples when Jesus met them at supper, and when they told him of having seen the Lord and of having eaten and conversed at length with Him, he boldly told them that he did not believe, nor would he believe Christ was risen unless he should see in

His hands the prints of the nails, and put his finger into the wounds, and thrust his hand into the pierced side.

Eight days later the disciples were again together and Thomas with them, when, as before, Jesus suddenly appeared, saying, "Peace be unto you." Fixing His eyes on Thomas, Jesus said to him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing." The challenge was too much for Thomas, the loving words melted his heart, he saw, he believed, and with signs of worshipful devotion and bursting joy he cried out, "My Lord and My God." "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed," answered Jesus.

Jesus in Galilee.

As Jesus had instructed, the eleven disciples left Jerusalem and went into Galilee to the coast towns of Gennesaret, where several of the first disciples lived. Thither also went Jesus, not by dusty way and toilsome journey; not with blistered feet and in half famishment, for the human now being separated from the spiritual nature, Jesus rode in the chariot of the winds, and at His will moved hither and yon like the flash of an eye that roams from earth to planet, from planet to immeasurable space.

Some of the disciples had resumed their fishing nets on Galilee, and there seven of them were engaged one whole night without taking anything. In the morning, as their vessel stood a short distance off the shore, they saw a man whom they did not recognize, but who called out to them, "Children, have ye any meat?" And they answered "No;" for they had not so much as a single fish. And Jesus again cried out to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the ship and ye shall find." Why, what strange advice; did not Peter and John and the two sons of Zebedee, who had spent all their lives fishing in this lake, know the best fishing places, and the best time for casting? But, nevertheless, the disciples threw in their biggest net, and when they would haul it in they found that there was such a multitude of fish that seven pairs of strong arms had scarcely strength enough to pull it. Here was a miracle; it had been done before, and John immediately knew who the Stranger on the bank must be. So he shouted, "It is the Lord!" That was enough for Peter, who being naked caught up his coat and hastily binding it around his loins plunged into the sea in his haste to reach the shore and embrace Jesus. The other disciples held on to the net and slowly hauled it to the bank with its tremendous catch.

When the disciples had come on shore they found Jesus cooking His breakfast, a fish broiling on some coals and bread near Him. But He called to them to bring some of the hundred and fifty-three large fish which they had taken, for they would now make a feast.



JESUS SHOWS HIMSELF TO HIS DISCIPLES.

Lovest Thou Me?

After a number of fish had been broiled and all the company had heartily eaten, Jesus spoke to Peter, saying, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these [disciples]?" "Yea, Lord," answered Peter, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." But Peter, whose asseverations of single devotedness to Jesus had been given before, had apparently changed his relationship to his Master. The impulsive and faithful Peter of Gethsemane had become the weak and thrice-denying Peter before the court of the high-priests. But the Lord would not condemn him for his denials; He more than any man could understand how fear, inspired by appalling danger, may wrap itself in a cloak of deception to effect escape, and beneath this mask Christ was able, with omniscient eye, to see the heart and note every change. Jesus therefore knew that Peter's denials were but expedients, and that they were not expressions of a changeful heart, but He would nevertheless test him again before restoring him to fullest fellowship in the Apostolic order. Therefore said Jesus, "If you love Me, feed My lambs." Or, in other words, "Love for Me is love for the world; go and minister to all who need you; spread the gospel, and be a true shepherd to Jew and Gentile, or whosoever will accept your teaching in My name." But again Jesus asked Peter the same question, to which he answered with emphasis, "Yes, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then said Jesus, "Feed My sheep." The sheep are those who have accepted Christ, but who must be encouraged and tended, for Peter was now to become the shepherd of the flock; and as a faithful shepherd looks carefully after the needs of his sheep, so must Peter, henceforth, minister to the spiritual wants of those committed to his keeping.

Jesus desired to impress upon Peter the supreme importance of his understanding the new condition which he would thereafter be under in his relationship to the church, of which he was to be a chief corner-stone of the foundation, and He therefore for a third time asked the question, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" The question was not meant to give reproof, but to impress instruction, though Peter felt humbled under a suspicion that his sincerity was doubted. Peter therefore answered, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then again Jesus commanded him, "Feed My sheep; think always of your weakness; if you have denied Me thrice under fear, may you not deny Me again, when equal danger threatens? You have exercised your liberties, as you do now, and have followed Me; but in your old age, as the shepherd of My flock, you will stretch forth your hands in helplessness and your enemies will bind you and do with you whatever their cruel natures prompt; and as you have seen Me crucified, so also will your enemies do with you, but your sufferings, as were Mine, will be to glorify God."

After Jesus had thus spoken, He said unto His disciples, "Follow Me."

But Peter, not understanding that Jesus meant he should follow Him with unfaltering footsteps to a martyr's cross, and seeing Jesus departing, construed the command literally and started to follow. But as Peter went on a few steps he saw John lingering behind, or coming at slower paces, and unwilling to separate from his companion he asked the Lord, "What shall this man do?" or, "May not John also follow us?" "Why," answered Jesus, "if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee." Or, "If it be My will that John shall not die till I come again, why should you seek to know it. Let My request be sufficient incentive to you; follow Me in faithful service to the end, nor seek to evade any of the responsibilities I have placed upon you. Bravely face all trial, all persecution, and lastly death itself, for every pain you suffer for My sake shall add a jewel to the crown which you shall wear."

Christ Reappears to Many Others.

Paul tells us that, some time after the meeting by the shore of Gennesaret, Jesus showed Himself, by appointment, on some mountain, most probably in Galilee, not only to the eleven disciples, but to more than five hundred persons, many of whom were living when Paul made the record. There was no mistake, for a large number in that glorious audience recognized Him fully and worshiped Him; but there were others who doubted, because perhaps they had never seen Jesus before, or so seldom that, with natural doubts, they could not recognize Him. But Jesus talked with His disciples, to whom He again declared His Messiahship, and gave to them His parting instruction in these words, "All power is given Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye into all the world [therefore in My name] and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Thereafter Jesus appeared to James, and once more to the eleven apostles, just preceding His ascension from Mt. Olivet, forty days after His crucifixion, so that altogether there must have been a thousand credible witnesses to His resurrection; testimony not only sufficient, but overwhelming. Evidence indisputable, proof convincing, a fact fully, completely, thoroughly established. Who may gainsay it?

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ASCENSION.

THE days in which Jesus was bound to earth were now nearly done; the sun of the last day had risen and was riding fast upward to the meridian, looking like a golden door standing open for our Lord's re-entering of heaven. He had told his disciples to await Him in Jerusalem until the time was come for the fulfillment of the prophecy that He should be received back up into heaven, which would occur not many days thence. That day was now at hand. Jesus met the disciples and gave to them a few parting words respecting the power which would be delegated to them, and of how they should be witnesses of all that they had seen, to the people of all the world. After thus speaking Jesus led them out as far as Bethany and to the Mount of Olives. Here the solemn, the sorrowing, but the glorious, parting was now to occur. The occasion was not one for words; there are moments in everyone's life when the tongue is no interpreter of the heart, when words would be obtrusive and an impediment to thought. Better let the tongue lie still than to allow it to break a sacred spell by voiceful interruption. The record was finished, and Jesus had written *finis* on the last leaf, and had given the closed book to His disciples for their guidance. Nothing now remained for Christ to do but to lift His loving hands and bless those to whom He had given the highest earthly commission, that of Apostleship. And while He blessed them He was caught up in a cloud and was parted from them.

Among the mountains of Palestine no one is more uplifting than Mount Olivet. It was the peroration of our Lord's ministry. On the roof of a house in Jerusalem I asked, "Which is Olivet?" and the first glance transfixed me. But how shall I describe my emotions, when, near the close of a journey, in which we had for two nights encamped amid the crumbled walls of old Jericho, and tasted of the acrid waters of the Dead Sea, that crystal sarcophagus of the buried cities of the plain, and waded down into the deep and swift Jordan to baptize a man, and visited the ruins of the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, we found ourselves in stirrups and on a horse lathered with the long and difficult way, ascending Mount Olivet. Over this ridge King David fled with a broken heart. Over it Pompey led his devastating hosts. Here the famous Tenth Legion were entrenched. The Garden of Gethsemane weeps at the foot of it. Along the base of this hill flashed the lanterns and torches of those who came to arrest Jesus. From the trees on this hill the boughs were torn off and thrown into the path of Christ's



THE PARTING ON MOUNT OLIVET.—Drawn by Plockhorst.

triumphal procession. Up and down that road Jesus had walked twice a day, from Bethany to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Bethany. There, again and again, He had taught His disciples. Half-way up this mount He uttered his lamentation, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" From its heights Jesus took flight homeward when He had finished His earthly mission. There is no reason for his staying longer. A sacrifice was needed to make peace between the recreant earth and the outraged heaven, and he had offered it. Death needed to be conquered, and He had put his resurrection foot upon it. The thirty-three years of voluntary exile had ended.

The Parting.

On Mount Olivet Jesus stands in a group of Galilee fishermen. They had been together in many scenes of sadness and persecution, and had been the more endeared by that brotherhood of suffering. They had expected Him to stay until the day of coronation, when he would take the earthly throne and wave a sceptre mightier, and rule a dominion wider, than any Pharaoh, than any David, than any Cæsar. But now all these anticipations collapse. Christ has given his last advice. He has offered His last sympathy. He has spoken His last word. His hands are spread apart as one is apt to do when he pronounces a benediction, when suddenly the strongest and most stupendous law of all worlds is shattered. It is the law which, since the worlds were created, holds them together. It is the law which holds everything to the earth, or, temporarily hurled from earth, returns to it; the law which keeps the planets whirling around our sun, and our solar system whirling around other systems, and all the systems whirling around the throne of God—the law of gravitation. That law is suspended, or relaxed, or broken, to let the body of Jesus go. That law had laid hold of Him thirty-three years before, when He descended. It had relaxed its grip of Him but once, and that when it declined to sink Him from the top of the waves on Lake Galilee, on which He walked, to the bottom of the lake. That law of gravitation must now give way to Him who made the law. It may hold the other stars, but it cannot longer hold the Morning Star of the Redemption. It may hold the noonday sun, but it cannot hold the Sun of Righteousness. The fingers of that law are about to open to let go the most illustrious Being the world had ever seen, and whom it had worst maltreated. The strongest law of nature which philosophers ever weighed or measured must at last give way. It will break between the rock of Olivet and the heel of Christ's foot. Watch it, all ye disciples! Watch it, all the earth! Watch it, all the heavens! Christ about to leave this planet. How? His friends will not consent to have Him go. His enemies catching Him would only attempt, by another Calvary, to put Him into some other tomb. I will tell you how. The chain of the most tremendous natural law is unlinked. The sacred foot of our Lord and the limestone rock part, and part forever.

From Earth and Persecution into Skies of Glory.

The cruel world took Him in at the start on a cradle of straw, and at last thrust Him out with the point of a spear; but benediction! Ascending until beneath, He saw on one side the Bethlehem where they put Him among the cattle, and Calvary on the other side, where they put Him among the thieves; but benediction! As far as the excited and intensified vision of the group on Olivet could see Him, and after He was so far up they could no longer hear His words, they saw the gesture of the outspread hands; the benediction! And that is His attitude to-day. His benediction upon the world's climates, and they are changing, and will keep on changing until the atmosphere shall be a commingling of October and June. Benediction upon the deserts till they whiten with lily, and blush with rose, and yellow with cowslip, and emerald with grass. Benediction upon the governments till they become more just and humane. Benediction upon nations till they kneel in prayer. Benediction upon the whole earth until every mountain is an Olivet of consecration, and every lake a Galilee on whose mosaic of crystal, and opal, and sapphire divine splendors shall walk.

Leaning back, and with pallid cheek and uplifted eyes, the disciples see their Lord rising from the solid earth. Then, rushing forward, they would grasp His feet to hold Him fast, but they are out of reach, and it is too late to detain Him. Higher than the tops of the fig-trees from which they had plucked the fruit. Higher than the olive-trees that shaded the mount. Higher, until He is within sight of the Bethlehem where He was born, and the Jordan where He was baptized, and the Golgotha where He was slain. Higher, until on stairs of fleecy cloud He steps. Higher, until, into a sky bluer than the lake that could not sink Him, He disappears into a sea of glory whose billowing splendors hide Him. The fishermen watch and watch, wondering if the law of nature will not reassert itself, and He shall in a few moments come back again, and they shall see Him descending; first His scarred feet coming in sight, then the scarred side, then the scarred brow, and they may take again His scarred hand. But the moments pass by, and the hours, and no reappearance. Gone out of sight of earth, but come within sight of heaven. And rising still, not welcomed by one angelic choir like those who one Christmas night escorted Him down, but all heaven turns out to greet Him home, and the temples have especial anthem, and the palaces especial banquet, and the streets especial throngs; and all along the line to the foot of the throne, for years vacated, there are arches lifted, and banners waved, and trumpets sounded, and doxologies chanted, and coronets cast down.

It was the greatest day in heaven! As He mounts the throne that thirty-three years before He abdicated for us, there rises from all the hosts of heaven a shout, saintly, cherubic, seraphic, archangelic, "*Hallelujah! Amen!*"

CONCLUSION.

WHY THIS MARTYRDOM? SUBSTITUTION!

AS a fitting conclusion to this work, which I offer as a tribute to my Lord, to whom all praise and glory and sacrifices are worthy to be paid, I desire to append a few observations on the crucifixion of Christ for the remission of our sins—His substitution as an expiation for our crimes—and to introduce parallels, copied from examples of history and experience, in illustration of the doctrine of Christ's atonement.

John G. Whittier, the last of the great school of American poets that made the last quarter of a century brilliant, asked me in the White Mountains, one morning after prayers, in which I had given out Cowper's famous hymn about "The Fountain filled with Blood," "Do you really believe there is a literal application of the blood of Christ to the soul?" My negative reply then is my negative reply now. The Bible statement agrees with all physicians, and all physiologists, and all scientists, in saying that the blood is the life, and in the Christian religion it means simply that Christ's life was given for our life. Hence all this talk of men who say the Bible story of blood is disgusting, and that they do not want what they call a "slaughter-house religion," only shows their incapacity or unwillingness to look through the figure of speech toward the thing signified. The blood that, on the darkest Friday that the world ever saw, oozed, or trickled, or poured from the brow, and the side, and the hands, and the feet of the illustrious Sufferer, back of Jerusalem, in a few hours coagulated and dried up, and forever disappeared; and if man had depended on the application of the literal blood of Christ, there would not have been a soul saved for the last eighteen centuries.

We only have to exercise as much common sense in religion as we do in everything else. Pang for pang, hunger for hunger, fatigue for fatigue, tear for tear, blood for blood, life for life, we see every day illustrated. The act of substitution is no novelty, although I hear men talk as though the idea of Christ's suffering substituted for our suffering were something abnormal, something distressingly odd, something wildly eccentric, a solitary episode in the world's history; when I can point you to five hundred cases of substitution and voluntary suffering of one in behalf of another.

At two o'clock any afternoon go among the places of business or toil. It will be no difficult thing for you to find men who, by their looks, show you that they are overworked. They are prematurely old. They are hastening rapidly

to their decease. They have gone through crises in business that shattered their nervous system, and pulled on the brain. They have a shortness of breath, and a pain in the back of the head, and at night an insomnia that alarms them. Why are they drudging at business early and late? For fun? No; it would be difficult to extract any amusement out of exhaustion. Because they are avaricious? In many cases no. Because their personal expenses are lavish? No; a few hundred dollars would meet all their wants. The simple fact is, the man is enduring all that fatigue and exasperation, and wear and tear, to keep his home prosperous. He is simply the champion of a homestead, for which he wins bread, and wardrobe, and education, and prosperity, and in such battle ten thousand men fall. Of ten business men whom I bury, nine die of overwork for others. Some sudden disease finds them with no power of resistance, and they are gone. Life for life. Blood for blood. Substitution!

The Mother's Sacrifice.

At one o'clock in the morning, the hour when slumber is most uninterrupted and most profound, walk amid the dwelling-houses of the city. Here and there you will find a dim light, because it is the household custom to keep a subdued light burning; but most of the houses from base to top are as dark as though uninhabited. A merciful God has sent forth an archangel of sleep, and he puts his wings over the city. But yonder is a clear light burning, and outside on the window casement a glass or pitcher containing food for a sick child; the food is set in the fresh air. This is the sixth night that mother has set up with that sufferer. She has to the last point obeyed the physician's prescription, not giving a drop too much or too little, or a moment too soon or too late. By dint of kindness she gets the little one through the ordeal. After it is all over, the mother is taken down. Brain or nervous fever sets in, and one day she leaves the convalescent child with a mother's blessing, and goes up to join the three in the kingdom of heaven. Life for life. Substitution! The fact is that there is an uncounted number of mothers who, after they have navigated a large family of children through all the diseases of infancy, and got them fairly started up the flowering slope of boyhood and girlhood, have only strength enough left to die. They fade away. Some call it consumption; some call it nervous prostration; some call it intermittent or malarial disturbance; but I call it martyrdom of the domestic circle. Life for life. Blood for blood. Substitution!

Or perhaps the mother lingers long enough to see a son get on the wrong road, and his former kindness becomes rough reply when she expresses anxiety about him. But she goes right on, looking carefully after his apparel, remembering his every birthday with some memento, and when he is brought home worn out with dissipation, nurses him till he gets well and starts him again, and hopes,

and expects, and prays, and counsels, and suffers, until her strength gives out and she fails. The simple fact is, she died for him. Life for life. Substitution!

Nearly thirty years ago there went forth from our homes hundreds of thousands of men to do battle for their country. All the poetry of war soon vanished, and left them the terrible prose. They waded knee-deep in mud. They slept in snow-banks. They marched till their cut feet tracked the earth. They were swindled out of their honest rations, and lived on meat not fit for a dog. They died in barns, in bushes, in ditches, the buzzards of the summer-heat the only attendants on their obsequies. No one but the infinite God, who knows everything, knows the ten-thousandth part of the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of anguish of the Northern and Southern battlefields. Why did these fathers leave their children and go to the front, and why did these young men, postponing the marriage-day, start out into the probabilities of never coming back? For the country they died. Life for life. Substitution!

Grappling with the Plague.

But we need not go so far. What is that monument in Greenwood? It is to the doctors who fell in the Southern epidemics. Why go? Were there not enough sick to be attended in these Northern latitudes? Oh, yes; but the doctor puts a few medical books in his valise, and some vials of medicine, and leaves his patients here in the hands of other physicians, and takes the rail-train. Before he gets to the infected regions he passes crowded rail-trains, regular and extra, taking the flying and affrighted populations. He arrives in a city over which a great horror is brooding. He goes from couch to couch, feeling of pulse and studying symptoms, and prescribing day after day, night after night, until a fellow-physician says: "Doctor, you had better go home and rest; you look miserable." But he cannot rest while so many are suffering. On and on, until some morning finds him in a delirium, in which he talks of home, and then rises and says he must go and look after those patients. He is told to lie down; but he fights his attendants until he falls back, and is weaker and weaker, and dies for people whom he never knew, and far away from his own family, and is hastily put away in a stranger's tomb, and only the fifth part of a newspaper line tells us of his sacrifice—his name just mentioned among five. Yet he has touched the furthest height of sublimity in that three weeks of humanitarian service. He goes straight as an arrow to the bosom of Him who said: "I was sick and ye visited Me." Life for life. Blood for blood. Substitution!

In the legal profession I see the same principle of self-sacrifice. In 1846, William Freeman, a pauperized and idiotic negro, was, at Auburn, N. Y., on trial for murder. He had slain the entire Van Nest family. The foaming wrath of the community could be kept off him only by armed constables. Who would

volunteer to be his counsel? No attorney wanted to sacrifice his popularity by such an ungrateful task. All were silent save one, a young lawyer with feeble voice, that could hardly be heard outside the bar, pale and thin and awkward. It was William H. Seward, who saw that the prisoner was idiotic and irresponsible, and ought to be put in an asylum rather than put to death, the heroic counsel uttering these beautiful words:

"I speak now in the hearing of a people who have prejudged prisoner and condemned me for pleading in his behalf. He is a convict, a pauper, a negro, without intellect, sense, or emotion. My child with an affectionate smile disarms my care-worn face of its frown whenever I cross my threshold. The beggar in the street obliges me to give because he says, 'God bless you!' as I pass. My dog caresses me with fondness if I will but smile on him. My horse recognizes me when I fill his manger. What reward, what gratitude, what sympathy and affection can I expect here? There the prisoner sits. Look at him. Look at the assemblage around you. Listen to their ill-suppressed censures and their excited fears, and tell me where among my neighbors or my fellow-men, where, even in his heart, I can expect to find a sentiment, a thought, not to say of reward or of acknowledgment, or even of recognition? Gentlemen, you may think of this evidence what you please, bring in what verdict you can, but I asseverate before Heaven and you, that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the prisoner at the bar does not at this moment know why it is that my shadow falls on you instead of his own."

The gallows got its victim, but the post-mortem examination of the poor creature showed to all the surgeons and to all the world that the public were wrong and William H. Seward was right, and that hard, stony step of obloquy in the Auburn court-room was the first step of the stairs of fame up which he went to the top, or to within one step of the top, that last denied him through the treachery of American politics. Nothing sublimer was ever seen in an American court-room than William H. Seward, without reward, standing between the fury of the populace and the loathsome imbecile. Substitution!

Christ the Archetype.

What an exalting principle this which leads one to suffer for another! Nothing so kindles enthusiasm, or awakens eloquence, or chimes poetic canto, or moves nations. The principle is the dominant one in our religion—Christ the Martyr, Christ the celestial Hero, Christ the Defender, Christ the Substitute. No new principle, for it was as old as human nature; but now on a grander, wider, higher, deeper and more world-resounding scale! The shepherd boy as a champion for Israel with a sling toppled the giant of Philistine braggadocio in the dust; but here is another David who, for all the armies of churches militant

and triumphant, hurls the Goliath of perdition into defeat, the crash of his brazen armor like an explosion at Hell Gate. Abraham had at God's command agreed to sacrifice his son Isaac, and the same God just in time had provided a ram of the thicket as a substitute; but here is another Isaac bound to the altar, and no hand arrests the sharp edges of laceration and death, and the universe shivers and quakes and recoils and groans at the horror.

All good men have for centuries been trying to tell whom this Substitute was like, and every comparison, inspired and uninspired, evangelistic, prophetic, apostolic, and human, falls short, for Christ was the Great Unlike. Adam a type of Christ, because he came directly from God; Noah a type of Christ, because he delivered his own family from the deluge; Melchisedec a type of Christ, because he had no predecessor or successor; Joseph a type of Christ, because he was cast out by his brethren; Moses a type of Christ, because he was a deliverer from bondage; Joshua a type of Christ, because he was a conqueror; Samson a type of Christ, because of his strength to slay the lions and carry off the iron gates of impossibility; Solomon a type of Christ, in the affluence of his dominion; Jonah a type of Christ, because of the stormy sea in which he was thrown for the rescue of others; but put together Adam and Noah and Melchisedec and Joseph and Moses and Joshua and Samson and Solomon and Jonah, and they would not make a half of a Christ, a quarter of a Christ, a fragment of a Christ, or the millionth part of a Christ.

He forsook a throne and sat down on His own footstool. He came from the top of glory to the bottom of humiliation, and changed a circumference seraphic for a circumference diabolic. Once waited on by angels, now hissed at by brigands. From afar and high up He came down; passed meteors swifter than they; by starry thrones, Himself more lustrous; past larger worlds to smaller worlds; down stairs of firmaments, and from cloud to cloud, and through tree-tops and into the camel's stall, to thrust His shoulder under our burdens and take the lances of pain through His vitals, and wrapped Himself in all the agonies which we deserve for our misdoings, and stood on the splitting decks of a foundering vessel, amid the drenching surf of the sea, and passed midnights on the mountains amid wild beasts of prey, and stood at the point where all earthly and infernal hostilities charged on Him at once with their keen sabres—our Substitute!

When did attorney ever endure so much for a pauper client, or physician for the patient in the lazaretto, or mother for the child in membranous croup, as Christ for us, and Christ for you, and Christ for me? Shall any man or woman or child who has ever suffered for another find it hard to understand this Christly suffering for us? Shall those whose sympathies have been wrung in behalf of the unfortunate have no appreciation of that one moment which was lifted out



MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU.

of all the ages of eternity as most conspicuous, when Christ gathered up all the sins of those to be redeemed under His one arm, and all their sorrows under His other arm, and said: "I will atone for these under my right arm, and will heal all those under my left arm? Strike me with all thy glittering shafts, O Eternal Justice! Roll over me with all thy surges, ye oceans of sorrow!" And the thunderbolts struck Him from above, and waves of trouble rolled up from beneath, hurricane after hurricane, and cyclone after cyclone, and then and there in presence of heaven and earth and hell, yea, all worlds witnessing, the price, the bitter price, the transcendent price, the awful price, the glorious price, the infinite price, the eternal price, was paid that sets us free.

That is what Paul means, that is what I mean, that is what all those who have ever had their heart changed mean by "blood." I glory in this religion of blood! I am thrilled as I see the suggestive color in sacramental cup, whether it be of burnished silver set on cloth immaculately white, or rough-hewn from wood set on table in log-hut meeting-house of the wilderness. Now I am thrilled as I see the altars of ancient sacrifice crimson with the blood of the slain lamb, and Leviticus is to me not so much the Old Testament as the New. Now I see why the destroying angel passing over Egypt in the night spared all those houses that had blood sprinkled on their door-posts. Now I know what Isaiah means when he speaks of "One in red apparel coming with dyed garments from Bozrah;" and whom the Apocalypse means when it describes a heavenly Chieftain whose "vesture was dipped in blood;" and what Peter, the Apostle, means when he speaks of the "precious blood that cleanseth from all sin;" and what the old, worn-out, decrepit missionary Paul means when he cries, "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." By that blood you and I will be saved—or never saved at all. In all ages of the world God has not once pardoned a single sin except through the Saviour's expiation, and He never will. Glory be to God that the hill back of Jerusalem was the battle-field on which Christ achieved our liberty!

The Waterloo of Redemption.

One of the most exciting and overpowering days of my life was the day I spent on the battlefield of Waterloo. Starting out with the morning train from Brussels, Belgium, we arrived in about an hour on that famous spot. A son of one who was in the battle, and who had heard from his father a thousand times the whole scene recited, accompanied us over the field. There stood the old Hougomont Château, the walls dented, and scratched, and broken, and shattered by grape-shot and cannon-ball. There was the well in which three hundred dying and dead were pitched. There was the chapel with the head of the infant Christ shot off. There were the gates at which, for many hours, English and French armies wrestled. Yonder were the one hundred and sixty guns of the English,

and there the two hundred and fifty guns of the French. Yonder the Hanoverian Hussars fled for the woods. Yonder was the ravine of Ohian, where the French cavalry, not knowing there was a hollow in the ground, rolled over and down, troop after troop, three thousand five hundred riders, and three thousand five hundred horses, tumbling into one awful mass of suffering, hoof of kicking horses against brow and breast of captains and colonels and private soldiers, the human and the beastly groan kept up until, the day after, all was shoveled under because of the mal-odor arising in that hot month of June.

"There," said our guide, "the Highland regiments lay down on their faces waiting for the moment to spring upon the foe. In that orchard twenty-five hundred men were cut to pieces. Here stood Wellington with white lips, and up that knoll rode Marshal Ney on his sixth horse, five having been shot under him. Here the ranks of the French broke, and Marshal Ney, boot slashed of a sword, and his hat off, and his face covered with powder and blood, tried to rally his troops as he cried: 'Come and see how a marshal of France dies on the battle-field.' From yonder direction Grouchy was expected for the French re-enforcement, but he came not. Around those woods Blucher was looked for to re-enforce the English, and just in time he came up. Yonder is the field where Napoleon stood, his arm through the reins of the horse's bridle, dazed and insane, trying to remount and go back." Scene of a battle that went on from twenty-five minutes to twelve o'clock, on the eighteenth of June, until four o'clock, when the English seemed defeated, and their commander cried out: "Boys, can you think of giving way? Remember Old England!" and the tides turned, and at eight o'clock in the evening the man of destiny, who was called by his troops Old One Hundred Thousand, turned away with a broken heart, and the fate of centuries was decided.

The Great Victory.

No wonder a great mound has been reared there, hundreds of feet high—a mound at the expense of millions of dollars and many years in rising, and on top is the great Belgian lion of bronze, and a grand old lion it is. But our great Waterloo was in Palestine. There came a day when all hell rode up, led by Apollyon, and the Captain of our salvation confronted them alone. The Rider on the white horse of the Apocalypse going out against the black-horse cavalry of death, and the battalions of the demoniac, and the myrmidons of darkness. From twelve o'clock at noon to three o'clock in the afternoon the greatest battle of the universe went on. Eternal destinies were being decided. All the arrows of hell pierced our Chieftain, and the battle-axes struck Him, until brow and cheek and shoulder and hand and foot were incarnadined with oozing life; but He fought on until He gave a final stroke with sword from Jehovah's buckler, and the commander-in-chief of hell and his forces fell back in everlasting ruin, and the victory is ours.

Doxology to Christ.

Let us go forth and gather the trophies for Jesus. From Golconda mines we gather the diamonds, from Ceylon banks we gather the pearls, from all lands and kingdoms we gather the precious stones, and we bring the glittering burdens and put them down at the feet of Jesus, and say, "All these are Thine. Thou art worthy." We go forth again for more trophies, and into one sheaf we gather all the sceptres of the Cæsars, and the Alexanders, and the Czars, and the Sultans, of all royalties and dominions, and then we bring the sheaf of sceptres and put it down at the feet of Jesus, and say, "Thou art King of kings, and these Thou hast conquered." And then we go forth again to gather more trophies, and we bid the redeemed of all ages, sons and daughters of the Lord



IT IS FINISHED.—Photograph of Celebrated Painting.

Almighty, to come. We ask them to offer their thanksgivings, and the hosts of heaven bring crown, and palm, and sceptre, and here by these bleeding feet and by this riven side, and by this wounded heart, cry, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive blessing and riches and honor and glory and power." I rejoice to know that the whole earth is yet to become the temple of His praise—grass and flowers the tessellated floor of that temple; mountains the pillars, tapestried with morning mist; the ocean the baptismal font; illimitable forests the wind-swept organ-pipes; and the vast heavens the dome into which shall roll, as Atlantic surges beat the beach, the doxology of ransomed hemispheres!

JESUS FOREVER!





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